

A NEW
HISTORY
OF
ENGLAND,

FROM THE
DESCENT of the ROMANS,
TO THE
DEMISE of his late Majesty, GEORGE II.

INSCRIBED TO
His present Majesty, GEORGE III.

By WILLIAM RIDER, A. B.
Late of *Jesus College, Oxford.*

*HISTORY is philosophy teaching by examples.
Bolingbroke from Dion. Hall.*

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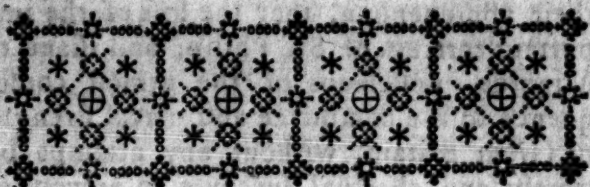
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THE
History of ENGLAND.



The HISTORY of GEORGE II.
continued. A. D. 1756.

 HE loss of Minorca, and the defeat of general Braddock, had made such a deep impression upon the minds of the English, that the nation, with one voice, called aloud for justice. The lord mayor, aldermen, and common-council of London,

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presented an address to the king, expressing their apprehension, that the loss of the important fortress of St. Philip, and island of Minorca, possessions of the utmost consequence to the commerce and naval strength of Great Britain, without any attempt by timely and effectual succours to prevent or defeat an attack, after such early notice of the enemy's intentions, and when his majesty's navy was so evidently superior to theirs, would be an indelible reproach to the honour of the British nation.

They represented the danger, to which the British possessions in America were exposed, by the mismanagement and delays, which had attended the defence of these invaluable colonies, the object of the present war, and the principal source of wealth and strength to these kingdoms. They lamented the want of a constitutional and well-regulated militia, the most natural and certain defence of his majesty's person and government against all invaders whatsoever; because thereby his fleets and armies might be the more securely employed abroad, to the annoyance of the enemy; assuring him, at the same time, that they were ready and willing, whenever called upon, to shed the last drop of their blood in his majesty's service. They signified their hope, that the authors
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of the late losses and disappointments would be detected and brought to condign punishment; that his majesty's known intentions of protecting and defending his subjects in their rights and possessions, might be faithfully and vigorously carried into execution; and that the large supplies, so necessarily demanded, and so chearfully granted, might be religiously applied to the defence of these kingdoms, their colonies and commerce, as well as to the distressing their inveterate and perfidious enemies, the only sure means of obtaining a lasting and honourable peace.

In answer to this address the king assured them, that he would not fail to do justice upon any persons, who should have been wanting in their duty to him and their country; to enforce obedience and discipline in his fleets and armies; and to support the authority and respect due to his government.

At the same time the citizens delivered instructions to their representatives, in which they exhorted them to use their utmost endeavours towards procuring a strict and impartial parliamentary enquiry into the causes of the many national calamities which had lately happened. They observed, that the almost total neglect of our important fortresses in the Mediterranean, of such inestimable

mable value to the trade and power of these kingdoms; and the unaccountable absence of their principal officers, many months after the commencement of hostilities; the actual loss of Minorca, and apparent danger of Gibraltar; were circumstances, that filled them with amazement and concern; but when they reflected on the vast preparations for an embarkation of troops and artillery, and the equipment of a powerful squadron, publickly known to be carried on at Toulon, whose neighbourhood to Minorca was sufficiently alarming, they could not impute those fatal events to neglect alone: they therefore conjured their members to enquire, why a respectable fleet was not immediately sent from hence? and why, at last, so small a squadron was ordered upon this important service, without any frigate, fireship, hospital ship, transport or troops beyond their ordinary complement? and this too at a time when the British naval force was confessedly superior to that of the enemy. They expressed their hope, that, as the hardships suffered, and losses sustained by their fellow-subjects in North America, had long called for redress; whilst the mismanagements in the attempts for their support, and the untimely and unequal succours sent to their relief, had only served
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to render the British name contemptible; their members would exert their utmost efforts in detecting those, who, by treachery or misconduct, had contributed to those great distresses.

They begged they would employ all their interest to procure the establishment of a constitutional well regulated militia, as the most honourable defence of the crown, and the most consistent with the rights of the people; and this measure they recommended to them with the greater earnestness, as every apprehension of danger, they said, had furnished a reason for encreasing the number of regular forces, and for the introduction of foreign mercenaries, whose service was disagreeable, and their expence insupportable. They hinted at some violation of the bill of rights by a suspension or interruption of the ordinary forms of justice, in favour of the foreign troops, then in England; and desired they would endeavour to bring to justice the advisers and instruments of such an insult offered to the laws of the kingdom.

They entreated them, at all events, to oppose the continuance of any foreign troops in Great Britain; a circumstance, which would ever be considered as a reproach to the

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the loyalty, courage, and ability of the nation. They concluded with intimating their wishes, that the number of placemen and pensioners, which had been of late so remarkably encreased, might be reduced; that triennial parliaments might be speedily restored, as the only means of obtaining a free representative of the people; and that all unnatural connexions on the continent might be carefully prevented, in order to preserve the independency of these kingdoms.

The example of London was immediately followed by almost all the counties and corporations in the kingdom. The inhabitants of Southwark, in their address to his majesty, expressed their sorrow and amazement at the loss of Minorna, at a time when our naval power so eminently exceeded that of our enemies, and the destination of their fleet had been so long and so generally known: but they added, that, stedfast in their allegiance, unalterable in their loyalty, unanimous in the defence of his majesty's sacred person and government, and animated with a just sense of his martial virtues, if properly supported by a well-regulated militia, they feared not the vain threats of foreign invaders; and most humbly begged leave to assure his majesty, with the greatest sincerity, that they would cheer-
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fully endeavour, at the hazard of their lives and fortunes, to crush all impious attempts, whether foreign or domestic, to subvert the constitution of this kingdom, and also to strengthen and invigorate those measures, which his majesty's great wisdom should dictate in conducting the scenes of this most necessary and important war, and in bringing to justice those, however dignified or exalted, who, by their bad counsel, or misconduct, had occasioned our present unhappy and distressful situation.

The inhabitants too of the county palatine of Chester presented an address to his majesty, importing, that they were extremely apprehensive, from many alarming circumstances, that the supplies, so chearfully and liberally given for the support of his majesty's British dominions, had been fatally misapplied : that they reflected, with the utmost concern and amazement, on the many signal calamities which had lately befallen the nation : that our fleets and armies had been rendered ineffectual by ignorance, cowardice, or treachery : that our American plantations, by which our trade principally flourished, had been shamefully torn from us, notwithstanding the large sums allowed for their defence : that Minorca, once gloriously acquired, and since

no less valiantly defended; an island, so essential to our commerce, and a jewel, so conspicuous in his majesty's crown, had, to the perpetual disgrace of the nation, and the dishonour of our arms, been shamefully abandoned to our perfidious enemy; an enemy we had hitherto never feared, but had often humbled: that their concern naturally increased, when they considered farther, that the taxes were grievous, and the national debt immense: that the trade of the kingdom daily lessened, though these multiplied; by which, they feared, we might soon be disabled from raising the necessary supplies for the support of his majesty's government, and the defence of our country's rights: that they beheld also, with the deepest sorrow, foreign troops unavailingly imported, and expensively maintained in the kingdom, while his majesty's faithful subjects were unarmed and rejected, who, innately brave, and cordially interested, would strenuously defend his sacred majesty and their now endangered country: that these melancholy reflections filled them with fear and amazement; and their allegiance to his majesty, and love of their native country, once the arbitress of Europe, induced them to unbosom their thoughts to his royal consideration; not doubting but they

they should obtain redress of their grievances from a king, who desired to be esteemed the father of his people : that they therefore begged leave most humbly to represent to his majesty the absolute necessity of having, as their natural guards, a well-regulated militia, upon the footing of the English constitution: and they likewise flattered themselves with the agreeable hopes, from his majesty's known justice and goodness, that he would be pleased to direct such a speedy and strict enquiry into the conduct of all those, who, when they had it in their power, did not prevent the public losses, but had conduced, or conspired, to overwhelm the nation, and his majesty's crown, with reproach and dishonour ; that they might receive the punishment which they so richly deserved. Addresses of the same nature were presented by the counties of York, Somerset, Essex, the city of Bristol, and by almost every corporation in the kingdom. In a word, the discontent of the people was inflamed to such a degree, that it was found absolutely necessary to make some examples. The first victim, offered to appease their resentment, was the unfortunate general Fowke, who had been deputy-governour of Gibraltar, and behaved with remarkable conduct and integrity in the

the exercise of that important office, till the period when he fell under the displeasure of the government. He was now brought to trial before a board of general officers, and accused of having disobeyed the orders he had received from the secretary at war in three successive letters*, touching the relief of Minorca.

Mr. Fowke alledged in his own defence, that the orders were confused, if not contradictory, and implied a discretionary power: that the whole number of his garrison did

* To Lieut. Gen. F—ke, or, in his absence, to the Commander in Chief in his Majesty's Garrison of Gibraltar.

War-Office, March 21, 1756.

S I R,

I am commanded to acquaint you, that it is his majesty's pleasure that you receive into your garrison lord Robert Bertie's regiment, to do duty there; and in case you shall apprehend that the French intend to make any attempt upon his majesty's island of Minorca, it is his majesty's pleasure, that you make a detachment out of the troops in your garrison equal to a battalion, to be commanded by a lieutenant-colonel and major: such lieutenant-colonel and major to be the eldest in your garrison, to be put on board the fleet for the relief of Minorca, as the admiral shall think expedient, who is to carry them to the said island. I am

Your humble Servant,

B.

did not exceed two thousand seven hundred men, after he had spared two hundred and seventy to the ships commanded by Mr. Edgcumbe: that the ordinary duty of the garrison requiring, in workmen and guards, eight hundred men, the whole number was not sufficient for three reliefs: that if he had detached a battalion on board the fleet, he should not have had above two reliefs, at a time when he believed the place was in

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To Lieut. Gen. F—ke, or, in his absence, to the Commander in Chief at Gibraltar.

War-Office, March 26, 1756.

S I R,

I am commanded to acquaint you, that it is his majesty's pleasure, in case the island of Minorca should be in any likelihood of being attacked, that you make a detachment from the troops in your garrison equal to a battalion, commanded by a lieutenant-colonel and major, for the relief of that place, to be put on board the fleet, at the disposition of the admiral: such lieutenant-colonel and major to be the eldest in your garrison.

To Lieut. Gen. F—ke, or, in his absence, to the Commander in Chief in his Majesty's Garrison in Gibraltar.

War-Office, April 1, 1756.

S I R,

It is his majesty's pleasure, that you receive into your garrison the women and children belonging to Robert Bertie's regiment.

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danger of being attacked, for good reasons which he did not think himself at liberty to mention : that his orders being doubtful, he held a council of war, which was of opinion, that as undoubted intelligence was received of the French army's being landed in Minorca to the number of between thirteen and sixteen thousand men, and that a French squadron of sixteen ships was stationed

To Lieut. Gen. F—ke, or the Commander in Chief at Gibraltar.

War-Office, May 12, 1756.

S I R,

I wrote to you by general Stewart : if that order is not complied with, then you are now to make a detachment of 700 men out of your own regiment and Guise's; and also another detachment out of Pulteney's and Panmure's regiments, and send them on board the fleet for the relief of Mahon. But if that order has been complied with, then you are to make only one detachment of 700 men, to be commanded by another lieutenant-colonel and major, and to send it to Mahon; and you are also to detain all such empty vessels as shall come into your harbour, and keep them in readiness for any farther transportation of troops. I have also his royal highness the duke of Cumberland's commands to desire, that you will keep your garrison as alert as possible, during this critical time, and give such other assistance as may be in your power for the relief of Minorca; taking care, however, not to fatigue or endanger your own garrison;

tioned off the harbour, the sending a detachment equal to a battalion from Gibraltar would be an ineffectual supply for the relief of the place, and a weakening of the garrison from which they must be sent.

He observed, that supposing the orders to have been positive, and seven hundred men detached to Minorca, the number remaining at Gibraltar would not have exceeded one thousand five hundred and fifty-six ; a deduction of seven hundred more, according to the order of May the twelfth, would have left a remainder of eight hundred and fifty-six : that the men daily on duty in the garrison, including artificers and labourers in the king's works, amounted to eight hundred and thirty-nine ; so that if he had complied with the orders as they arrived, he would not have had more than seventeen men over and above the number necessary for the daily work of the garrison : thus the important fortress of Gibraltar must, at this critical juncture, have been left almost naked and defenceless to the attempts of the enemy ; and had those detachments been actually sent aboard, it afterwards appeared that they could not have been landed on the island of Minorca. Notwithstanding these plausible allegations, when the trial was finished, and the question put to acquit

or suspend for one year, the court was equally divided; and in such cases the casting vote being vested in the president, he gave it against the prisoner, whom his majesty thought fit to dismiss from his service.

The attention of the public was now eagerly turned towards America, the chief, if not the sole scene of our military operations. On the twenty-fifth day of June, Mr. Abercrombie arrived at Albany, the frontier of New York, and assumed the command of the forces there assembled, consisting of two regiments which had served under Braddock, two battalions raised in America, two regiments now transported from England, four independent companies which had been many years maintained in New York, the New Jersey regiment, four companies levied in North Carolina, and a body of provincial forces raised by the government of New England.

The southern provinces, including Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia, had not yet resolved on any regular plan of operation, and had moreover great difficulty in defending their western frontier from the French and Indians, who, in sculking parties, made sudden irruptions upon their unguarded settlements, burning, plundering, and massacring with the most savage inhumanity,

manity. As for South Carolina, the proportion of Negro slaves to the number of white inhabitants, was so great in that colony, that the government could not, with any regard to the safety of the province, spare any troops for the general enterprize.

The plan of this undertaking had been concerted the preceding year in a council of war held at New York. Here it was determined to attack the fort of Niagara, situated between the lakes Ontario and Erie, in order to cut off the communication between Canada and Louisiana, and prevent the French from supporting their new fortresses on the Ohio; to reduce Ticonderago and Crown-Point, so that the frontier of New York might be secured against any future invasion, and Great Britain become master of the lake Champlain, over which the forces might be transported in case of necessity; to besiege Fort Du Quesne upon the Ohio; and to detach a body of troops, by the river Kennebec, to alarm the capital of Canada.

This plan was too extensive to be executed by the number of troops, which had been prepared for the service: the season was too far advanced before the regiments arrived from England, the different colonies were divided in their sentiments, and Mr.

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Abercrombie postponed the undertaking of any important scheme till the arrival of lord Loudon, who was daily expected.

As the reasons, that delayed the reinforcement, and detained his lordship so long, were never communicated to the public, we do not pretend to explain them; though it may be observed, in general, that many fair opportunities have been lost by the neglect and procrastination of an English ministry. Certain it is, the unaccountable delay of this armament defeated its intention for a whole year, afforded time and leisure to the enemy to make preparations against any future attack, and, in the mean time, to proceed unmolested in harassing the British settlements.

Even before this period, they had attacked and reduced a small fort in the country of the five nations, defended by twenty-five Englishmen, who were cruelly massacred to a man, in the midst of those Indians, whom Great-Britain had long reckoned among her allies.

Immediately after this expedition, having received intelligence, that a considerable convoy of provisions and stores, for the garrison at Oswego, would, in a little time, set out from Sheneetady, and be transported in battoes up the river Onondaga, they laid
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an ambuscade among the woods and thickets on the north side of that river; but hearing, that the convoy had passed before they arrived at the place, they resolved to wait the return of the detachment.

Their design, however, was disappointed by the courage and conduct of colonel Bradstreet, who expected such an attempt, and had made preparations for giving them a warm reception. On the third day of July, while he sailed down the river, with his battoes formed into three divisions, he was saluted with the Indian war-whoop, and a general discharge of musquetry from the north shore. He instantly ordered his men to land on the opposite bank, and with a few of the foremost took possession of a small island, where he was forthwith attacked by a party of the enemy, who had forded the river for that purpose; but these were soon repulsed.

Another body having crossed a mile higher, he advanced against them at the head of two hundred men, and attacked them, sword in hand, with such impetuosity, that many were killed on the spot, and the rest driven into the river with such precipitation, that a considerable number of them was drowned. Hearing that a third body of them had passed at a ford still higher, he
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marched thither with incredible dispatch, and chased them to the other side, where they were entirely routed and dispersed.

In this action, which lasted near three hours, about seventy of the battor-men were killed or wounded : but the enemy lost double the number killed, and above seventy taken prisoners. In all probability the whole detachment of French, consisting of seven hundred men, would have been cut off, had not a heavy rain fallen, and prevented colonel Bradstreet from improving his advantage ; for that same night he was joined by captain Patten, with his grenadiers, in his march from Oneida to Oswego, and next morning reinforced with two hundred men, sent to his assistance from the garrison of Oswego : but by this time the rivulets were so swelled by the rain, that it was found impossible to pursue the enemy through the woods and thickets.

Patten and his grenadiers accompanied the detachment to Oswego, while Bradstreet prosecuted his voyage to Schenectady ; from whence he repaired to Albany, and imparted to general Abercrombie the intelligence he had received from the prisoners, importing, that a large body of the enemy had taken post on the eastern side of the lake Ontario, furnished with artillery, and
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all other implements, to form the siege of Oswego.

In consequence of this information, major-general Webb was ordered to hold himself in readiness to march with one regiment to the relief of that garrison; but, before they could be provided with necessaries, the earl of Loudon arrived at the headquarters at Albany, on the twenty-ninth day of July. The army at this time is said to have amounted, in regular troops, to the number of two thousand six hundred, about seven thousand provincials, supposed to be in readiness to march from Fort William-Henry, under the command of general Winslow, besides a considerable number of battoe-men at Albany and Schenectady.

The garrison at Oswego consisted of fourteen hundred soldiers, together with three hundred workmen and sailors, either in the fort, or posted in small parties between the fort and a place called Burnet's Field, to secure a passage through the country of the Six Nations, upon whose friendship there was no longer any reliance. According to the most authentic intelligence, the enemy had about three thousand men at Crown-Point and Ticonderago upon the lake Champlain; but their chief strength was collected upon the banks of the lake Ontario,

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rio, where their intention undoubtedly was to attack the English fort at Oswego.

The immediate object, therefore, of lord Loudon's operations was the relief of this place: but his design was vigorously opposed by the province of New York, and other northern governments, who were much more intent upon the reduction of Crown-Point, and the security of their own frontiers, which they imagined were in still greater danger. They insisted upon Winslow's being reinforced by some regiments of regular troops before he should march against this fortress; and proposed, that a body of reserve should be kept at Albany, for the defence of that frontier, in case Winslow should fail in his attempt and be defeated.

At length they agreed, that the regiment which Mr. Abercrombie had allotted for that purpose, should be sent to the relief of Oswego; and on the twelfth day of August major-general Webb began his march with it from Albany: but on his arrival at the carrying place, between the Mohock's river and Wood's creek, he received the disagreeable news that Oswego was taken, and the garrison made prisoners of war. Mr. Webb, apprehensive of being attacked by the enemy, began to render the creek impassable,
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even to canoes, by felling trees, and throwing them into the river; while the French, ignorant of his numbers, and dreading the like attempt from him, took the very same precautions for preventing his approach: in consequence of which he was permitted to retire at leisure.

The loss of the two small forts, called Ontario and Oswego, was a considerable national misfortune. They were erected at the mouth and on the opposite shores of the river Onondago, that discharges itself into the lake Ontario, and constituted a post of great importance, where vessels had been built, to cruise upon the lake, and distress the commerce as well as disappoint the designs of the enemy.

The garrison, as has been already observed, consisted of fourteen hundred men, chiefly militia and new-raised recruits, under the command of lieutenant colonel Mercer, an officer of courage and experience: but the situation of the forts was extremely inconvenient; the materials mostly timber, or logs of wood; the works ill contrived, and worse executed; and, in a word, the place altogether indefensible against any regular approach. Such were the forts of which the enemy had determined to make themselves masters. Being perfectly secure
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with regard to Crown Point, they collected a body of troops, consisting of thirteen hundred regulars, seventeen hundred Canadians, and a considerable number of Indian auxiliaries, under the command of the marquis de Montcalm, a brave and enterprising officer, to whom the conduct of the siege was committed by the marquis de Vaudreuil, governor and lieutenant-general of New France.

The first step taken by Montcalm was to block up Oswego by water with two large armed vessels, and post a strong body of Canadians on the road between Albany and the forts, to cut off all communication of succour and intelligence. In the mean time, he embarked his artillery and stores upon the lake, and landed them in the bay of Nixouri, the place appointed for the general rendezvous. At another creek, within half a league of Oswego, he raised a battery for the protection of his vessels; and on the twelfth day of August, at midnight, after the proper dispositions had been made, he opened the trenches before Fort Ontario. The garrison, conscious of the weakness of the place, fired away all their shells and ammunition, spiked up the cannon, and, abandoning the fort, retired next day across the river into Oswego, which was even
more

more exposed than the other, especially when the enemy had taken possession of Ontario, from whence they immediately began to fire without intermission. Colonel Mercer, being, on the thirteenth, killed by a cannon ball, the fort destitute of all cover, the officers divided in opinion, and the garrison struck with a panic, they next day demanded a capitulation, and surrendered themselves prisoners of war, on condition, that they should be secured from plunder, conducted to Montreal, and treated with humanity.

These conditions, however, were but very ill observed. The British officers and soldiers were insulted by the savage Indians, who robbed them of their cloaths and baggage, massacred several men as they stood defenceless on the parade, assassinated lieutenant De la Court as he lay wounded in his tent, under the protection of a French officer, and barbarously scalped all the sick people in the hospital. Nay, Montcalm, in direct violation of the articles, as well as in contempt of common humanity, delivered up above twenty men of the garrison to the Indians, in lieu of the same number they had lost during the siege; and, in all probability, these miserable captives were put to death by those barbarians with the

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most excruciating tortures, according to the execrable custom of the country:

Those who countenance the perpetration of cruelties, at which human nature shudders with horror, ought to be branded as infamous to all posterity. Such, however, are the trophies that, in the course of the American war, have distinguished the operations of a people who pique themselves upon politeness, and the virtues of humanity.

Such of the prisoners, as remained alive, were conveyed in battoes to Montreal, where they had no reason to complain of their reception; and, before the end of the year, they were exchanged and sent to England. The victors immediately dismantled the two forts, in which they found one hundred and twenty-one pieces of artillery, fourteen mortars, with a great quantity of ammunition, warlike stores, and provision, besides two sloops and two hundred battoes, which likewise fell into their hands. Such an important magazine, deposited in a place altogether indefensible, and without the reach of immediate succour, was a flagrant proof of the folly, if not the treachery of the ministry.

The earl of Loudon, finding the season too far advanced for undertaking any enterprize

prize against the enemy, employed all his endeavours in making preparations for an early campaign in the spring, in securing the frontiers of the English colonies, in concerting an uniform plan of action, and promoting a spirit of harmony among the different governments, which had been long divided by jarring interests, and other sources of dissension.

In the mean time, the forts Edward and William-Henry were put in a proper posture of defence, and furnished with numerous garrisons; and the forces distributed into winter-quarters at Albany, where comfortable barracks were built for their accommodation.

Fort Granville, on the confines of Pennsylvania, an inconsiderable blockhouse, was surprized by a party of French and Indians, who made the garrison prisoners, consisting of two and twenty soldiers, with a few women and children. These they loaded with flour and provision, and drove into captivity; but the fort they entirely demolished.

Many shocking murders were committed upon defenceless people, without distinction of age or sex, in different parts of the frontiers: but these misfortunes were in some measure compensated by the advantages resulting from a treaty of peace, which the

governor of Pennsylvania concluded with the Delaware Indians, a powerful tribe that inhabit the banks of the river Sasquehanna, forming, as it were, a line along the southern skirts of the province. At the same time the governor of Virginia secured the friendship and alliance of the Cherokees and Catawbias, two powerful nations bordering upon that colony, who were able to bring three thousand fighting men into the field.

All these circumstances considered, the English had reason to expect that the ensuing campaign in America would be prosecuted with the utmost vigour, especially as a fresh reinforcement of troops, with a great supply of warlike stores, was sent to that country in fourteen transports, under convoy of two ships of war, which sailed from Cork in Ireland about the beginning of November.

The naval transactions of this year in the West-Indies were neither numerous nor interesting. In the beginning of June captain Spry, who commanded a small squadron off Louisbourg, in the island of Cape Breton, took the *Arc en Ciel*, a French ship of fifty guns, having on board about five hundred men, with a large quantity of provisions for the garrison. He likewise intercepted

tercepted another French ship with seventy soldiers, two hundred barrels of powder, two large brass mortars, and other stores destined for the same purpose.

On the twenty-seventh day of July, commodore Holmes, cruising in the same latitude, with two large ships and a couple of sloops, attacked two French ships of the line and four frigates, and obliged them to sheer off, after an obstinate engagement.

A great number of privateers were fitted out in this country, as well as in the West-India Islands belonging to the crown of Great-Britain; and as these seas swarmed with French vessels, their captures proved very advantageous to the adventurers.

The military exploits performed in the East-Indies, were much more vigorous and spirited. The suspension of arms between the English and French companies on the peninsula of Indus, though it encouraged Mr. Clive to visit his native country, was but of very short continuance: for, in a few months, both sides renewed hostilities, no longer as auxiliaries to the princes of the country, but as principals and rivals, both in influence and commerce.

Major Laurence, who now possessed the chief command of the English forces, obtained several advantages over the enemy:

and prosecuted his conquests with such vigour, as, in all probability, would in a little time have brought the war to a speedy conclusion, when the progress of his arms was interrupted by an unfortunate event at Calcutta, which struck the English company with terror and consternation.

A treaty had been set on foot between them and the French, when Suzajud-Douza, viceroy of Bengal, Bakar, and Orixá, taking umbrage at the refusal of certain duties, to which he laid claim, being particularly incensed at the English governor of Calcutta for having granted protection to one of his subjects whom he had outlawed, and moreover instigated by the insidious representations of the French and Dutch companies, assembled a numerous army, and advancing to Calcutta, invested the place, which was then in no posture of defence.

The governor, Mr. Drake, intimidated by the number and power of the enemy, declared himself a quaker, and abandoning the fort with some principal persons residing in the settlement, took refuge on board a ship in the river, carrying along with him his most valuable effects, and the books of the company.

Thus the defence of the place devolved to Mr. Holwell, the second in command, who,

who, with the assistance of a few gallant officers, and a very feeble garrison, maintained it with extraordinary courage and resolution against several attacks, until he was overpowered by numbers, and the enemy had forced a passage into the castle. Then he was obliged to submit; and the suba, or viceroy, declared on the word of a soldier, that no injury should be done to him or his garrison.

Notwithstanding this assurance, they were all driven, to the number of one hundred and forty-six persons of both sexes, into a place called the black-hole prison, a square of about eighteen feet, walled up to the eastward and southward, the only quarters from which they could expect the least refreshing air, and open to the westward by two windows strongly barred with iron, through which there was no perceptible circulation. The humane reader cannot reflect, without horror, on the miserable situation to which they must have been reduced, when thus stewed up in a close sultry night under such a climate as that of Bengal, especially when he considers that many of them were wounded, and all of them fatigued with hard duty. Transported with rage to find themselves thus barbarously used, those hapless victims endeavoured to force open the door, that they

they might rush upon the swords of the barbarians by whom they were guarded : but all their efforts were ineffectual ; the door was made to open inwards, and being once shut upon them, the crowd pressed upon it so strongly as to render all their attempts abortive. This circumstance overwhelmed them with distraction and despair. Mr. Holwell, who had placed himself at one of the windows, accosted a Jemmatdaar, or sergeant of the Indian guard, and having endeavoured to move his compassion, by drawing a pathetic picture of their sufferings, promised to make him a present of a thousand rupees in the morning, if he could find means to convey one half of them into a separate apartment. The soldier, tempted by the prospect of such a reward, assured him he would do his endeavour for their relief, and retired for that purpose ; but, in a few minutes returned, and told him, that the suba, by whose order alone such a step could be taken, was asleep, and no person durst disturb his repose. By this time every individual was covered with a profuse sweat, which was attended with an insatiable thirst ; and became the more intolerable as the body was drained of its moisture. In vain did those miserable objects strip themselves of their cloaths, squat down on their hams,
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and fan the air with their hats, in order to produce a refreshing undulation. Many were unable to rise again from this posture, but falling down were trod to death or suffocated. The dreadful symptom of thirst was now accompanied with a difficulty of respiration, and every individual gasped for breath. Their despair became outrageous: again they endeavoured to force open the door, and provoke the guard to fire upon them by curses and imprecations. The cry of "Water! Water!" issued from every mouth. Even the Jammataar was moved with compassion at their distress. He ordered his soldiers to bring some skins of water, which served only to inflame the appetite and increase the general confusion. There was no other way of conveying it through the windows but by hats, and this was rendered ineffectual by the violent transports of the wretched prisoners, who, at sight of it, struggled and raved even into fits of madness. In consequence of these contests very little reached those that stood nearest the windows, while those at the farther end of the prison were totally cut off from all relief, and continued calling upon their friends for assistance, and conjuring them by all the tender ties of pity and affection. To those who were indulged with it, it proved pernicious;

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for, instead of allaying their thirst, it inflamed their appetite for more. The confusion became general and horrid: all was clamour and uproar: those who were at a distance endeavoured to force their passage to the window, and the weak were pressed down to the ground never to rise again. The barbarous ruffians without, seemed to triumph in their misery; they supplied the prisoners with more water, and held up lights close to the bars, that they might enjoy the inhuman pleasure of seeing them fight for the baneful indulgence. Mr. Holwell seeing all his particular friends lying dead around him, and trod upon by the living, finding himself wedged up so close, as to be deprived of all motion, begged, as the last instance of their regard, that they would remove the pressure, and permit him to retire from the window, that he might die in quiet. Even in those dreadful circumstances, which might be supposed to have destroyed all distinction, the poor delirious wretches discovered a respect for his rank and character. They forthwith gave way, and he forced his passage into the center of the place, which was not so much crowded; because, by this time, one third of the number had perished, and lay in little compass on the floor, while the rest still pressed forward

ward to the windows. He retired to a platform at the farther end of the room, and, lying down upon some of his dead friends, recommended his soul to heaven. Here his thirst grew intolerable: his difficulty in breathing increased, and he was seized with a strong palpitation. These violent symptoms, which he could not bear, urged him to make another effort: he forced his way back to the window, and cried aloud, "Water! for God's sake!" His wretched companions imagined he had been dead; but finding him still alive, they exhibited another extraordinary proof of tenderness and regard to his person: "Give him water," they cried; nor would one of them presume to touch it until he had drank. He now breathed more freely, and the palpitation ceased: but finding himself still more thirsty after drinking, he abstained from water, and moistened his mouth from time to time by sucking the perspiration from his shirt-sleeves. The miserable prisoners, perceiving that water rather encreased than allayed their thirst, grew clamorous for air, and repeated their insults to the guard, pouring forth the most bitter imprecations against the suba and his governor. From imprecations they had recourse to prayer, beseeching heaven to put an end to their

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their misery. They now began to drop on all hands; but then a steam arose from the living, and the dead, as pungent and volatile as spirit of hartshorn; so that all who could not approach the windows were suffocated. Mr. Holwell, being weary of life, retired once more to the platform, and stretched himself by the reverend Mr. Jervas Bellamy, who, together with his son, a lieutenant, lay dead in each other's arms. In this situation he was soon deprived of sense, and lay to all appearance dead till day-break, when his body was discovered, and carried by his surviving friends to one of the windows, where the fresh air revived his spirits, and restored him to the use of his sight and senses. The suba, at last, being told that the greater part of the prisoners were stifled, inquired if the chief was alive; and being answered in the affirmative, sent an order for their immediate release, when no more than twenty-three survived of an hundred and forty-six who had been imprisoned.

Nor was the late deliverance, even of these few, owing to any sentiment of compassion in the viceroy. He had received information, that there was a large treasure concealed in the fort, and that Mr. Holwell knew the place where it was deposited. That gentleman,

tleman, who, with his surviving companions, had been seized with a putrid fever, immediately upon their release, was dragged in that condition before the barbarous suba, who examined him about the treasure, which existed no where but in his own imagination; and would give no credit to his protestations, when he solemnly declared he knew of no such deposit. Mr. Holwell and three of his friends were loaded with fetters, and transported three miles to the Indian camp, where they lay all night, exposed to a severe rain: next morning they were brought back to town, still manacled, under the scorching beams of a sun intensely hot; and must infallibly have perished, had not nature expelled the fever in large painful boils, that covered almost the whole body. In this deplorable condition they were embarked in an open boat for Muxadavad, the capital of Bengal, and underwent such cruel treatment and misery as no other persons ever outlived. At Muxadavad they were led through the city in chains, as a spectacle to the populace, lodged in an open stable, and treated for some days as the worst of criminals. At length the suba's grandmother, moved with compassion at their pitiable case, interposed her mediation in their behalf; and as that prince

was by this time convinced that there was no treasure concealed at Calcutta, he ordered them to be set at liberty. When some of his courtiers opposed this indulgence, alledging, that Mr. Holwell had still enough left to pay a considerable ransom, he replied with some marks of compunction and generosity, "If he has any thing left, let him keep it: his sufferings have been great: he shall have his liberty." Mr. Holwell and his friends were no sooner freed from their fetters, than they took water for the Dutch Tankfall or mint, in the neighbourhood of the city, where they were received with great tenderness and humanity. The reader, it is hoped, will excuse this particular account of a transaction so interesting and extraordinary in all its circumstances.

By the loss of Calcutta, the English East-India company's affairs were thrown into such confusion in that part of the world, that perhaps nothing could have saved them from utter ruin but the interposition of a national force and the good fortune of a Clive, whose enterprizes had been already so successful. In consequence of the company's representations to the government, a small squadron of large ships had been sent to the East Indies, under the command
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of admiral Watson; and in the course of this year arrived at Fort St. David's. The governor of that fortress understanding, that Tullagree Angria, a piratical prince in the neighbourhood of Bombay, was on the point of concluding a treaty with the nation of the Marahattas, which would prove extremely prejudicial to the interest of the English, formed a resolution to drive him from his residence at Geriah, which was well fortified, and annihilate his power, which was formidable to all the trading ships of Europe: for he maintained a considerable number of armed gallies called grabs, with which he often attacked the largest ships, when they happened to be becalmed on that part of the Malabar Coast. He was the fourth in descent from the first freebooter, who rendered himself independent, and lived like a sovereign prince possessed of extensive territories. The enterprise against Angria was originally concerted with the Marahattas, who likewise fitted out an armament both by sea and land against Geriah: but they acted entirely on their own bottom, and in the reduction of the place gave no manner of assistance to the English.

Admiral Watson sailed from the coast of Coromandel to Bombay, where his squadron

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was cleaned and repaired; and having procured proper intelligence with respect to the harbour and fort of Geriah, resolved, with the advice of a council of war, to proceed immediately on the expedition. Being reinforced by a small squadron of ships, equipped at the company's expence, having on board a body of troops commanded by colonel Clive, he departed from Bombay on the seventh day of February, and found in the neighbourhood of Geriah the Marahatta fleet, consisting of four grabs and forty vessels of inferior size, called gallivats, lying to the northward of the place, in a creek named Rajipore; and a land army of horse and foot, amounting to seven or eight thousand men, the whole commanded by Rhamagee Punt, who had already taken one small fort, and was actually treating about the surrender of Geriah. Angria himself had abandoned the fort; but his wife and family remained under the protection of his brother-in-law; who, being summoned to surrender by a message from the admiral, replied, that he would defend the place to the last extremity. In consequence of this refusal the whole English fleet, in two divisions, entered the harbour on the twelfth day of February, and sustained a warm fire from the enemy's batteries as they

they passed, as well as from the grabs posted in the harbour for that purpose. This, however, was soon silenced after the ships were brought to their stations, so as to ply their artillery with any sort of effect. Between the hours of four and five in the afternoon, a shell being thrown into one of Angria's armed vessels, set her on fire; and the flames spreading instantaneously to the rest, they were all destroyed. Between six and seven the fort was set on fire by another shell; and soon after the firing ceased on both sides. The admiral, apprehending that the governor of the place would surrender it to the Marahattas rather than to the English, disembarked all the troops under Mr. Clive, that he might be at hand in case of necessity to take possession. In the mean time the fort was bombarded: the line of battle ships were warped near enough to batter in breach; and then the admiral sent an officer with a flag of truce to the governor, requiring him to surrender. His proposal being again rejected, the English ships renewed their attack next day with redoubled fury. About one o'clock the magazine of the fort was set on fire and instantly blew up; and at four the garrison hung out a white flag for capitulation. The parley, however, proving ineffectual,

the engagement began again; and lasted till fifteen minutes after five; when the white flag was once more displayed, and now the governor submitted to the terms which were prescribed. Angria's flag was immediately hauled down; and two English captains taking possession of the fort with a detachment, forthwith hoisted the British colours. In this place, which was reduced with a very inconsiderable loss, the victors found above two hundred cannon, six brass mortars, a large quantity of ammunition, with money and effects to the value of one hundred and twenty thousand pounds. The fleet which was destroyed, consisted of eight grabs, one ship finished, two upon the stocks, and a good number of gallivats. Among the prisoners the admiral found Angria's wife, children, and mother, towards whom he demeaned himself with great tenderness and humanity. When he entered their apartment, the whole family shedding floods of tears, fell with their faces to the ground; from which being raised, the mother of Angria told him, in a piteous tone, the people had no king, she no son, her daughter no husband, and their children no father. The admiral replying, "they must look upon him as their father and their friend;" the youngest boy, about six years of age, seized him by the

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the hand, and sobbing exclaimed, " then you shall be my father." Mr. Watson was so affected with this pathetic address, that the tears trickled down his cheeks, while he assured them they might depend upon his protection and friendship.

The fort was supplied with a garrison of three hundred European soldiers, and as many seapoys ; and four of the company's armed vessels remained in the harbour for the defence of the place, which was extremely well situated for commerce.

The admiral and Mr. Clive returned to Madras in triumph ; and there another plan was concerted for retrieving the company's affairs upon the Ganges, recovering Calcutta, and inflicting condign punishment upon the cruel viceroy of Bengal. In October they set sail again for the bottom of the bay ; and about the beginning of December arrived at Ballasore in the kingdom of Bengal. Having passed the Braces, they advanced up the river Ganges as far as Falta, where they found governor Drake and the other persons who had escaped on board of the ships when Calcutta was besieged. Colonel Clive was disembarked with his forces to attack the fort of Busbudgia by land, while the admiral bombarded it by sea ; but the place being ill supplied with cannon,

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non, did not hold out above an hour after the firing began. This fortress being reduced with little or no loss, two of the great ships were stationed between Tanna fort and a battery on the other side of the river, which were abandoned before one shot was discharged against either; thus the passage was laid open to Calcutta, the recovery of which shall be particularly related among the transactions of the ensuing year.

Having thus, to the best of our power, given a faithful and exact detail of every material event, in which Great Britain was concerned either at home, or in her settlements abroad, during the greatest part of the year 1756, we shall now return to Europe, and endeavour to explain the beginning of a bloody war in Germany, which soon seemed to engross the chief attention of all the courts in Christendom.

The French monarch, amongst the other plans he had formed for distressing our affairs, made no secret of his design of attacking his majesty's German dominions. These countries evidently had no sort of connexion with the matters, which gave rise to the war: but being subject to a sovereign, so remarkably affectionate to his native country, the French imagined he might be terrified into a relaxation of his rights in America,

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to preserve Hanover from the calamities with which it was threatened.

Their politics, however, in this instance, proved as unsuccessful as they were unjust. No motion was made towards an abatement of our claims with regard to America: his majesty took other methods for the peace of Germany. The British subjects, by their representations, not more generously than reasonably, resolved to defend the Hanoverians, if attacked in their quarrel.

To answer this purpose, the ministry entered into a subsidy-treaty with the empress of Russia, in virtue of which she was to hold in readiness fifty thousand men to be sent on requisition, wherever the British service should require. The alliance with Russia was chosen for reasons, which were then sufficiently plausible; though it is to be hoped they will never exist again.

The misunderstanding, which had so long subsisted between the king of Prussia and England, and the close connexion of that prince with the court of Versailles, raised no ill-grounded apprehensions, that he might be induced to act a dangerous part on this occasion: Russia was therefore a proper ally, who was both a political and personal enemy to that monarch, and who would not fail to employ

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employ a formidable power in supporting such a cause.

But this system was in a short time totally reversed. The king of Prussia had been too well apprized of the conjunction of the courts of Vienna and Petersburg, and of the real motive to that conjunction, to have the least design of imbroiling himself with England. Matters were therefore very soon explained, and the treaty between his Prussian majesty and this court, to keep all foreigners out of Germany, was signed at London in January of this year.

These treaties were censured as inconsistent with each other, but in reality nothing could be more consistent, as they aimed precisely at the same object ; to oppose the schemes projected by France for disturbing the peace of Germany.

If, considering the sentiments of these courts, there was something unexpected in the alliance between Great Britain and Prussia ; it was soon followed by another alliance of a nature infinitely more surprising. The empress queen of Hungary, finding England in no disposition to assist her in her designs, had recourse to other measures.

That princess, who had formerly had the address to engage all Europe to defend her
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against the power of France, now entered herself into the most intimate union with that ambitious power. By this extraordinary revolution the whole political system of Europe assumed a new face: it was indeed a revolution so singular and unexpected, that the reader, we imagine, will not be displeased with a short review of the several causes that concurred to produce it.

The house of Brandenburg, a little more than two centuries ago, was in a very humble condition: but, by the part which she took in the reformation, which put into her hands the estates of the Teutonic order; by a marriage, which brought her the dutchy of Cleves; and by a continued succession of able princes, who carefully improved every turn in the affairs of Germany to their own advantage; she raised herself, by degrees, to a considerable state, to an electorate, and at last to a royalty, not in name only, but in power and influence.

The late king of Prussia, in order to strengthen that power, though he spent the greatest part of his reign in the most profound peace, turned his whole attention to his army. Remarkably frugal in other respects, in this alone he was expensive. It was his sole business, and, what perhaps was of greater moment, it was his only diver-

diversion. Thus, in a reign apparently inactive, there was always kept on foot an army of one hundred thousand men, who were as regularly accustomed to exercise and discipline, as if they had been engaged in a perpetual course of hostilities.

His present majesty, on his accession to the throne, discovered immediately a strong inclination to employ effectually that military force, which his father had spent his whole life in forming and training. He managed his dispute with the bishop of Liege by the summary method of force; and seemed disposed to carry all things with so high a hand, as made him, indeed, much respected, but much dreaded too by the princes of the empire, who saw, that there was another power to be feared in Germany, besides that of Austria.

But these were matters of little or no consequence; rather the faint symptoms, than the full exertions of that prince's spirit. He had projected plans of far greater importance, and only waited a favourable opportunity to make good the ancient claims of his family on the most considerable part of Silesia. The right to that dutchy seems evidently to have belonged to the family of Brandenburg; but the house of Austria, availing herself of her great power, and of the
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the diffension between the elector Frederic the second and his son, prevailed with the father to give up his right for an equivalent; and afterwards persuaded the son, for a trivial consideration, to give up the equivalent itself.

The king of Prussia, not thinking himself bound by these acts, though frequently ratified and confirmed, took advantage of his own power and the embarrassed circumstances of the house of Austria, to recover that, of which their power and the embarrassed circumstances of his family had formerly deprived him. No sooner had the emperor, Charles the sixth, expired, and the Austrian greatness seemed irrecoverably ruined, than he entered Silesia, and made himself master of the whole duchy with very little opposition. Then uniting himself with the French and Bavarians, he secured his conquests by two decisive victories, and by a treaty, which procured him the greatest and best part of Silesia; and the whole country of Glatz.

But the cause of the emperor, which the king of Prussia had espoused, soon occasioned a renewal of hostilities. The queen of Hungary saw herself defeated in three pitched battles: she beheld her new ally, the king of Poland, driven from his German

dominions, and the king of Prussia entering Dresden in triumph, where he gave law in a treaty, by which Silesia was once more solemnly confirmed to him; in return for which he guarantied to the queen of Hungary the rest of her dominions.

That princess could not easily lose the memory of the wound she had received in being deprived of one of the finest and richest parts of her dominions. Silesia, which she had just ceded, extends in length about two hundred miles along the banks of the large navigable river Oder; a country of the most exquisite fertility and highest cultivation, abounding with men, replete with valuable manufactures, and yielding a clear annual revenue of eight hundred thousand pounds sterling.

Hardly, therefore, was the peace concluded, by which she resigned this valuable territory, when she presently set on foot a new negociation for restoring it once more to the dominion of her family. For this purpose she entered into a treaty with the court of Petersburg, of an innocent and simply defensive nature, so far as appeared to the public: but six secret and separate articles were added, by one of which it was provided, that, in case his Prussian majesty should attack the empress queen, or the em-

emprefs of Russia, or even the republic of Poland, such attack should be considered as a breach of the treaty of Dresden; that the right of the emprefs queen to Silesia, ceded by that treaty, should revive; and that the contracting powers should, each of them, furnish an army of sixty thousand men to reinvest the emprefs queen with the possession of that dutchy.

To this extraordinary treaty the king of Poland was invited to accede; and he did so far accede to it, as to shew he perfectly agreed in his sentiments with these courts: but his situation in the neighbourhood of a formidable enemy, and the experience of past misfortunes, had rendered him so wary, that he declined signing the treaty; an indulgence, with which he was easily gratified by the parties concerned, whom he, nevertheless convinced, of his firm resolution to co-operate with them in all their measures. He accordingly desired, and they agreed, that, in the event of their arms being crowned with success, he should have a share in the spoils of the Prussian dominions, agreeable to a treaty for the eventual partition of that monarch's territories concluded in the course of the last war. Thus the king of Poland, without actually signing,

was understood and received as a party in the treaty of Petersburg.

In consequence of these measures, every sort of means was employed to embroil the king of Prussia's affairs in the North, and particularly to render him personally odious to the Czarina. When these machinations had taken their full effect, and Russia was inflamed with an implacable resentment against that monarch, preparations of magazines and armies were made in Bohemia and Moravia; and the king of Poland, under pretence of a military amusement, drew together about sixteen thousand men, with which he occupied the strong and important post of Pirna.

The queen of Hungary saw, that she should stand in need of yet stronger supports than these in the execution of the arduous enterprize she had undertaken. Finding, however, that Great Britain, which had formerly done so much for her safety, would now do little for her ambition, she had recourse to France, who joyfully accepting an alliance that promised to confound the whole Germanic body, concluded a treaty with the empress at Versailles on the first day of May 1756, a remarkable era in the political history of Europe.

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These negotiations, though carried on with equal secrecy and dispatch, could not escape the penetrating eye of his Prussian majesty, who instantly ordered all his forces to be completed, and to hold themselves in readiness to march at the first notice.

At the same time, a report having been trumped up by the partizans of the empress queen, that the destruction of the Catholic faith in Germany was the principal object of the new alliance between Great Britain and Prussia, his Britannic majesty ordered his electoral minister at the dyet of Ratisbon to deliver a memorial to all the ministers of the empire, expressing his surprize to find the treaty he had concluded with the king of Prussia, invidiously represented as a ground of apprehension and umbrage, especially for religion. He observed, that as France had made formidable preparations for attacking the electorate of Hanover, and disturbing the peace of the empire; that as he had been denied, by the empress queen, the succours stipulated in treaties of alliance; and as he was refused assistance by certain states of the empire, who even seemed inclined to favour such an invasion; he had, in order to provide for the security of his own dominions, to maintain the peace and tranquillity of the empire, and

defend its system and privileges, without any prejudice to religion, concluded a defensive treaty with the king of Prussia: that, by this instance of patriotic zeal for the welfare of Germany, he had done an essential service to the empress queen, and performed the part which the head of the empire, in dignity and duty, ought to have performed: that time would shew how little it was the interest of the empress queen to enter into a strict alliance with a foreign power, which, for upwards of two centuries, had laid waste the principal provinces of the empire, maintained numerous and bloody wars against the archducal house of Austria, and always endeavoured, as it suited her views, to excite distrust and dissension among the princes and states that compose the Germanic body.

The court of Vienna formed two considerable armies in Bohemia and Moravia; yet, pretended that they had nothing in view but self-preservation, and solemnly disclaimed both the secret articles of the treaty of Petersburg, and the design which had been laid to their charge. His most christian majesty declared, by his minister at Berlin, that he had no other intention but to preserve the public tranquillity of Europe; and this being the sole end of all his measures,

tures, he could not help being surprized at the preparations and armaments of certain potentates: that, whatever might be the view with which they were made, he was resolved to make use of the power which God had put into his hands, not only to maintain the public peace of Europe against all who should presume to disturb it; but also to employ all his forces, agreeable to his engagements, for the assistance of the empress queen in case her dominions should be invaded: and finally, that he would act the same friendly part towards all the other powers with whom he was joined in alliance.

This declaration made very little impression upon his Prussian majesty, who ordered Mr. de Klingraase, his minister at the Imperial court, to demand whether all those preparations of war, on the frontiers of Silesia, were designed against him, and what were the intentions of her Imperial majesty? to this demand the empress would deign to make no other reply, than that, in the present juncture, she had found it necessary to make armaments, as well for her own defence as for that of her allies; but that they did not tend to the prejudice of any person or state whatever. The king, far from being satisfied with this evasive answer, sent fresh orders

orders to Klingraafe to represent, that, after the king had dissembled, as long as he thought consistent with his safety and honour, the bad designs imputed to the empress would not suffer him longer to disguise his sentiments: that he was acquainted with the offensive projects, which the two courts had formed at Petersburg: that he knew they had engaged to attack him suddenly with their united force; the empress queen supplying eighty thousand men, and the Czarina one hundred and twenty thousand: that this design would have been executed in the spring of the year, had not the Russian army wanted recruits, their fleet mariners, and Livonia a sufficient quantity of corn for their support: that he constituted the empress arbiter of peace or war; if she desired the former, he required a clear and formal declaration, or positive assurance, that she had no intention to attack him, either this year or the next; but he should look upon an ambiguous answer as a declaration of war: and he called heaven to witness, that the empress alone would be guilty of the innocent blood that should be shed, and all the dismal consequences that would attend the commission of hostilities.

Her Imperial majesty, disdaining, as she said, to be addressed in such a dictatorial
style

file by a prince of the empire, returned an answer, importing, that his majesty the king of Prussia had already been employed, for some time, in all kinds of the most considerable preparations of war, and the most disquieting, with regard to the public tranquillity, when he thought fit to demand explanations of her majesty, touching the military dispositions that were making in her dominions; dispositions, on which she had not resolved, till after the preparations of his Prussian majesty had been made: that though her majesty might have declined explaining herself on those subjects, which required no explanation, she had been pleased to declare, with her own mouth, to Mr. de Klingraase, that the critical state of public affairs made her look upon the measures she was taking, as absolutely necessary for her own safety, and that of her allies; but that, in other respects, they tended to the prejudice of no person whatsoever: that her Imperial majesty had undoubtedly a right to form what judgment she pleased on the circumstances of the times; and likewise, that it belonged to none but herself to estimate her own danger: that her declaration was so clear, she never imagined it could be thought otherwise: that being accustomed to receive, as well as to shew the respect,

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which sovereigns owe to each other, she could not bear, without astonishment and sensibility, the contents of the memorial now presented by Mr. de Klingraafe; so extraordinary, she said, both in the matter and expressions, that she would find herself under a necessity of transgressing the bounds of that moderation which she had prescribed to herself, were she to answer the whole of its contents: that nevertheless, she thought proper to declare, that the information, communicated to his Prussian majesty, of an offensive alliance against him, subsisting between herself and the empress of Russia, together with the circumstances and pretended stipulations of that alliance, were absolutely false and forged; for that no such treaty did exist, or ever had existed: and she concluded with retorting upon him all the dreadful events of the war.

His Prussian majesty, being equally dissatisfied with this answer, ordered his resident at Vienna once more to declare, that if the empress queen would sign a positive assurance, that she would not attack the Prussian dominions, either this year or the next, he would directly withdraw his troops, and let things be restored to their former footing. This demand was evaded, on pretence that such an assurance could not be
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more binding than the solemn treaty by which he was already secured ; a treaty, it was said, which the empress queen had no intention to violate.

His Prussian majesty, being fully convinced, by this tergiversation, of the hostile designs of his enemies, resolved to obtain, by force of arms, what he could not procure by more peaceable methods. His army entered the Saxon territory towards the latter end of August ; when he published a declaration, importing, that the unjust conduct and dangerous views of the court of Vienna against his majesty's dominions, laid him under the necessity of taking proper measures for defending his territories and subjects : that for this purpose he could not forbear taking the disagreeable resolution to enter with his troops the hereditary dominions of his majesty the king of Poland, elector of Saxony : but he protested before God and man, that, on account of his personal esteem and friendship for that prince, he would not have proceeded to this extremity, had he not been forced to it by the laws of war, the fatality of the present conjuncture, and the necessity of providing for the defence and security of his subjects. He reminded the public of the tenderness with which he had treated the elector of Sax-

Saxony, during the campaign of the year 1744; and of the bad consequences resulting to that monarch from his engagements with the enemies of Prussia. He declared, that the apprehensions of being exposed again to such enterprizes, had obliged him to take those precautions which prudence dictated: but he affirmed, in the most solemn manner, that he had no hostile views against his Polish majesty, or his dominions: that his troops did not enter Saxony as enemies, being strictly enjoined to observe the best order and the most exact discipline: and that he wished for nothing more earnestly than the happy minute, that should procure him the satisfaction of restoring to his Polish majesty his hereditary dominions, which he had seized only by way of pledge for his safety.

By his minister at Dresden, he had demanded a free passage for his forces through the Saxon dominions; and this the king of Poland seemed ready to grant under certain restrictions to be settled by commissaries appointed for that purpose. But his Prussian majesty insisting, that the king of Poland should disband his forces, and that prince refusing to agree to this condition, a body of Prussian troops, amounting to fifteen thousand, under the command of prince Fer-

Ferdinand, brother to the duke of Brunswick, took possession of Leipzig on the twentieth day of September. Here he issued a declaration, importing, that it was his Prussian majesty's intention to consider and defend the inhabitants of that electorate as if they were his own subjects; and that he had given precise orders to his troops to observe the most exact discipline.

These orders, it must be owned, were but very indifferently observed in the sequel; but this circumstance was, in all probability, owing to the full conviction, which the king of Prussia had, of the hostile intentions of his Polish majesty. The inhabitants, therefore, were ordered to provide the army with all sorts of provision, according to a certain rate, on pain of military execution. That same evening notice was given to the corporation of merchants, that their deputies should pay all taxes and customs to the king of Prussia: then the general took possession of the custom house and excise-office, and ordered the magazines of corn and meal to be opened for the use of his soldiers.

Mean while, the king of Poland, attended by his two sons, Xaverius and Charles, had retired to the camp at Pirna; but the queen and the rest of the royal family remained at Dresden. Of this capital his

Prussian majesty, with the bulk of his army, took possession on the eighth day of September, when he was visited by the lord Stormont, the English ambassador at that court, accompanied by count Salmour, a Saxon minister, who, in his master's name, proposed a neutrality.

The king of Prussia professed himself extremely ready to agree to such a proposal; and, as the most convincing proof of his sincerity, desired the king of Poland would separate his army, by ordering his troops to return to their former quarters.

But his Polish majesty still rejecting this condition, the Prussian monarch resolved to have recourse to more effectual methods. With this view he fixed his head quarters at Seidlitz, about half a German league distant from Pirna, and posted his army in such a manner as to be able to intercept all convoys of provision designed for the Saxon camp: his forces extended on the right towards the frontiers of Bohemia, and the van-guard actually seized the passes that lead to the circles of Satzer and Leutmeritz in that kingdom; while prince Ferdinand of Brunswick marched with a body of troops along the Elbe, and made himself master of this place without opposition. At the same time the king secured his own dominions by
assem-

assembling two considerable armies in Upper and Lower Silesia, which occupied the passes that communicate with the circles of Buntzlau and Koningsgratz.

Hostilities were commenced on the thirteenth day of September by a detachment of Prussian hussars, who attacked an Austrian escorte to a convoy of provisions, intended for the Saxon camp; and having defeated them, carried off a considerable number of loaded waggons. The magazines at Dresden were filled with an immense quantity of provision and forage for the Prussian army, and the bakers were ordered to prepare a vast quantity of bread, for which purpose thirty new ovens were erected.

When the king of Prussia first entered Dresden, he took up his quarters at the house of the countess Moczinika; and gave orders, that the queen and royal family of Poland should be treated with all due veneration and respect: even while the Saxon camp was blocked up on every side, he sometimes permitted a waggon, loaded with fresh provision and game, to pass unmolested for the use of his Polish majesty.

His first care, however, was to make himself master of those papers, which might give him a full insight into the dangerous designs that had been formed against him

by the courts of Vienna, Petersburg, and Dresden; and, in doing this, he is said to have been laid under the disagreeable necessity of using some roughness towards the queen of Poland; a circumstance, that exposed him greatly to the virulent invectives of his enemies, but was little regarded by any but such, as preposterously thought that the welfare of kingdoms should be sacrificed to a piece of unmeaning gallantry.

During these transactions the greatest part of the Prussian army advanced into Bohemia, under the command of the veldt marshal Keith*, who reduced the town and palace of Tetchen, seized all the passes, and took post near Aussig, a small town in Bohemia, at no great distance from the Imperial army, consisting of sixty thousand men, commanded by count Brown, an officer of Irish extract, who had often distinguished himself in the field by his courage, vigilance, and conduct.

His Prussian majesty, having left a sufficient body of troops for the blockade of Pirna, assumed in person the command of
mare-

* Brother to the earl marshal of Scotland, a gentleman who had signalized himself as a general in the Russian army, and was accounted one of the best officers of his time; not more admired for his genius, than amiable in his disposition.

marechal Keith's corps, and advanced against the enemy with a view to give them battle. On the twenty-ninth day of September he divided his troops into two columns, and in the evening arrived with his van at Welminz, from whence he saw the Austrian army posted with its right at Lowoschutz, and its left towards the Egra.

Having secured with six battalions a hollow way, and some rising grounds, which commanded the town of Lowoschutz, he remained all night under arms at Welmina; and on the first day of October, early in the morning, drew up his whole army in order of battle; the first line, composed of the infantry, occupying two hills, and a bottom betwixt them; the second line being formed of some battalions, and the third consisting of the whole cavalry.

The Austrian general had taken possession of Lowoschutz with a great body of infantry, and placed a battery of cannon in the front of the town: he had formed his cavalry chequerwise, in a line between Lowoschutz and the village of Sanschitz; and posted about two thousand croats and irregulars in the vineyards and avenues on his right.

The morning was darkened with a thick fog, which vanished about seven: then the

Prussian cavalry advanced to attack the enemy's horse; but met with such a warm reception from the irregulars, posted in vineyards, and ditches, as well as from a numerous artillery, that they were obliged to retire for protection behind the Prussian infantry and cannon. There being rallied, and led back to the charge, they made an impression on the Austrian cavalry, and drove the Croats and Pandours from the ditches, defiles, and vineyards which they possessed: but they sustained such a rude shock in this dangerous service, that the king ordered them to re-ascend the hill, and take post again in the rear of the infantry, from whence they no more advanced.

In the mean time a furious cannonading was maintained on both sides, which did great execution. At length the left of the Prussian infantry was ordered to attack the town of Lowoschutz in flank; but received such a severe fire that in all probability they would have miscarried, had not veldt-marchal Keith headed them in person. When he drew his sword, and told them he would lead them on, he was given to understand, that all their powder and shot was exhausted. He turned immediately to them with a cheerful countenance, and said he was
very

very glad they had no more ammunition, being fully confident the enemy would not withstand them at push of bayonet : so saying, he marched on at their head, and driving the Austrians from Lowoschutz, set the suburbs on fire. Their infantry had been already obliged to abandon the eminence on the right, and now their whole army retired to Budin, on the other side of the Egra.

Some prisoners, colours, and pieces of cannon, were taken on both sides ; and the loss of each might amount to two thousand five hundred killed and wounded : so that, on the whole, it was a drawn battle, though both generals laid claim to the victory. The account of the action, published at Berlin, declared, that the king of Prussia not only gained the battle, but that same day fixed his head quarters at Lowoschutz : whereas the Austrian gazette affirmed, that the marshal count Brown obliged his Prussian majesty to retire, and remained all night on the field of battle ; but next day, finding his troops in want of water, he repaired to the camp of Budin.

If the battle was at all decisive, the advantage certainly fell to the Prussians ; for the Austrian general was effectually prevented

ed from relieving the Saxon forces, which was the chief object he had then in view.

The Prussian army having rejoined that body, which had been left to block up the Saxons at Pirna, his Polish majesty and his troops were reduced to such extremity of distress, that it became absolutely necessary either to attempt an escape, or surrender to the king of Prussia.

The former part of the alternative was chosen, and the plan concerted with count Brown, who resolved to make one effort more to assist them. With this view he advanced to Lichtendorf with a considerable body of forces; but he found it impossible to give them any kind of succour.

On the fourteenth day of October the Saxons threw a bridge of boats over the Elbe near Konigstein, to which castle they conveyed all their artillery: then striking their tents in the night, they passed the river undiscovered by the enemy. They continued their march with all possible expedition; but, the roads were so bad, that they made little progress.

Next day, when part of them had advanced about half way up a hill opposite to Konigstein, and the rest were cooped up in a narrow valley where there was no room to act, they observed that the Prussians were

possession of all the passes, and found themselves surrounded on every side, fainting with hunger and fatigue, and destitute of every convenience.

Such was their deplorable situation, when the king of Poland, from the fortress of Konigstein, wrote the following letter to his general, the veldt marechal count Rutowski :

“ Veldt-marechal count Rutowski,
 “ It is not without extreme sorrow I understand the deplorable situation, which
 “ a chain of misfortunes has reserved for
 “ you, the rest of my generals, and my
 “ whole army : but we must acquiesce in
 “ the dispensations of providence, and console ourselves with the rectitude of our
 “ sentiments and intentions. They would
 “ force me, it seems, as you give me to
 “ understand by major-general the baron
 “ de Dyhern, to submit to conditions the
 “ more severe, in proportion as the circumstances are become more necessitous. I
 “ cannot hear them mentioned. I am a
 “ free monarch ; such I will live ; and I
 “ will both live and die with honour. The
 “ fate of my army I leave wholly to your
 “ discretion. Let your council of war determine whether you must surrender prisoners
 “ soners

“soners of war, fall by the sword, or die
 “by famine. May your resolutions, if pos-
 “sible, be conducted by humanity : what-
 “ever they may be, I have no longer any
 “share in them : and I declare you shall
 “not be answerable for aught but one
 “thing, namely, not to carry arms against
 “me or my allies. I pray God may have
 “you, Mr. Marechal, in his holy keeping.
 “Given at Konigstein the 14th of October,
 “1756.

Augustus Rex.

“To the veldt-marechal the count Ru-
 “towski.”

No sooner did the count Rutowski receive
 this letter than he summoned a council of war
 to deliberate on the measures, which they
 ought to pursue ; but as the Austrian gene-
 ral had by this time retired to Budin, there
 was no choice left. A capitulation was de-
 manded : but the terms granted were clog-
 ged with such restrictions, that most of the
 Saxons found it necessary to enlist in the
 Prussian service. *

The

* As the articles of capitulation, especially the an-
 swers returned by his Prussian majesty, are somewhat
 curious, and breathe an air of humour and pleasantry,
 it may not be improper to insert them at length.

Arti-

The king of Poland, being thus stripped of his electoral dominions, his troops, arms, artillery, and ammunition, thought it high time

Article I. The army of the king of Poland, elector of Saxony, as posted at the foot of Lilienstein, shall surrender to the king of Prussia prisoners of war.

Ans. If the king will give me that army, 'tis needless to make them prisoners of war.

II. The generals, the field-officers, the persons employed as commissaries and purveyors, and all the other officers of the army, shall keep their baggage and effects, as well those they have actually with them, as what they may have left in other places; and the subaltern officers and soldiers shall be allowed to keep their cloathing, arms, and knapsacks.

Ans. All that can be preserved or recovered of their baggage shall be faithfully restored to them.

III. His Prussian majesty is chiefly requested to cause the army to be furnished with the necessary provisions and forage; and that he would be pleased to give the necessary orders for this purpose.

Ans. Granted, and rather to-day than to-morrow.

IV. The generals, commandants, and all persons ranking as officers, engage themselves, in writing, not to bear arms against his majesty, the king of Prussia, till peace be restored; and they shall be left at liberty to stay in Saxony, or to retire whithersoever they think proper.

Ans. Those, that intend to enter into my service, from this very moment have liberty to do so.

V. The life guards and the grenadier-guards shall not be included in the first article; and his Prussian majesty will be pleased to appoint the place in the elec-

time to provide for his own safety, and retired with all expedition to Poland. His Prussian majesty cantoned his forces in the neigh-

electorate of Saxony, or in the territories depending thereon, where the said troops shall be distributed. The field-marshal, count Rurowski, as captain of the grenadier-guards, the chevalier de Saxe, in quality of commandant of the life-guards, and all the other officers of these two corps, mutually engage, and even in writing, if desired, not to make, under any pretext whatever, nor without the approbation of the king of Prussia, any change in the quarters, that may be assigned them.

Ans. There is no exception to be made; because it is known, that the king of Poland did give orders for that part of his troops, which is in the said kingdom, to join the Russians, and to march, for this purpose, to the frontiers of Silesia; and a man must be a fool to let troops go, which, he holds fast, to see them make head against him a second time, and to be obliged to take them prisoners again.

VI. The general and field-officers, and all the officers, shall keep their swords; but the arms, belts, and cartridges, both of the subalterns and soldiers, horse and dragoons, &c. shall be carried to the castle of Konigstein, together with the colours, standards, and kettle-drums.

Ans. Kettle-drums, standards, and colours, may be carried to Konigstein; but not the arms: no more than the cannon belonging to the regiments, the warlike stores, and the tents. The officers, no doubt, shall keep their swords; and I hope, that such of them,

neighbourhood of Seidlitz, and along the Elbe towards Dresden. His other army, which had entered Bohemia under the com-

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mand

them, as are of a willing mind, will make use of them in my service.

VII. The same thing shall take place with regard to the field-artillery and the provision-waggon.

Ans. Granted.

VIII. His Prussian majesty shall give assurances, that no officer or soldier shall be obliged, against his will, to enlist in his army; and that, after peace is restored, they shall all be sent back to the king of Poland; and, on the other hand, his Polish majesty may not refuse dismissal to the generals, and the other officers of the army, who may engage in any other service.

Ans. No body need trouble his head about this. No general shall be forced to serve against his will: that is sufficient.

IX. As to what is furnished to the life-guards and grenadier-guards, if his Prussian majesty pleases, we shall agree about the manner of proceeding therein, and settle, at the same time, with that monarch, the funds, out of which the salaries of the generals, officers, and other persons attendant on the army, are to be paid monthly, according to the estimates, that shall be drawn by major-general Zeutsch, commissary at war.

Ans. It is very reasonable I should pay those who will serve; and, this payment shall be made out of the clearest receipts of the contributions. As to the generals, they shall be treated like men, who have honourably served; and it will be very easy to provide for their subsistence.

X. His

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mand of the count de Schwerin, retired to the confines of the county of Glatz, where they were distributed in quarters of cantonment;

X. His said majesty shall also explain himself about the quarters and subsistence to be granted to the several regiments of cavalry and infantry, as well as to the engineers and artillery-corps.

Ans. I take upon me the maintenance of the army, and it shall be paid more regularly than heretofore, on the same footing as my own troops.

XI. The king of Prussia will be so good as to order when and how the generals, and the whole army without exception, with the baggage, shall file off from the post, in which they are at present.

Ans. This point may be settled in a quarter of an hour. We must chuse the most commodious road, and the places nearest at hand for giving them subsistence.

XII. His Prussian majesty will be pleased to allow the necessary measures to be taken for removing and lodging the sick, that are incapable of following the army, and that they are properly attended.

Ans. Granted.

XIII. The generals, the field and subaltern officers, as also the soldiers, who have hitherto been made prisoners, or have been left behind, shall be included in the present capitulation.

Ans. Granted.

Done at Ebenbert, at the
foot of Lilienstein.

Signed Rutowski.

XIV. (A separate article.) I am authorized to oblige the army to lay down their arms; but I have
no

ment; so that this short campaign was finished by the beginning of November.

The king of Poland, in his distress, did not fail to exclaim against the conduct of his Prussian majesty, and to implore the assistance and mediation of neutral powers. His minister at the Hague presented a memorial to the States General, importing, that the invasion of Saxony was one of those attacks against the law of nations, which, from the great respect due to this law, demanded the assistance of every power interested in the preservation of its own liberty and independency: that, from the first appearance of misunderstanding between the courts of Vienna and Berlin, he had

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expressly

no authority to free them from the oath of allegiance they have taken, nor to oblige them to take another. As for the rest, it is left to his Prussian majesty's disposal. Lieutenant-general Winterfield gave me reason to hope, that that monarch would have made no difficulty to grant one squadron more of the life-guards. His majesty will be so good as to resolve about the fortress of Konigstein, where the company of cadets and grenadiers are at present with his Polish majesty.

Done the 16th of Oct. 1756.

Signed Rutowski.

Ans. Konigstein must be a neutral place during the course of the present war.

Signed Frederick.

expressly commanded his ministers at all the courts of Europe to declare, that it was his firm resolution, in the present conjuncture of affairs, to observe the strictest neutrality : that a free and neutral state had been, in the midst of peace, invaded by an enemy, who disguised himself under the masque of friendship, without alledging the least complaint, or any pretension whatsoever ; but regulating himself solely by his own convenience, made himself master of all the cities and towns of the electorate, dismantling some, and fortifying others : that he had disarmed the burghers ; carried off the magistrates as hostages for the payment of unjust and enormous contributions of provisions and forage ; seized the coffers, confiscated the revenues of the electorate, broke open the arsenals, and transported the arms and artillery to his own town of Magdeburg ; abolished the privy council, and, instead of the lawful government, established a directory, which acknowledged no other law than his own arbitrary will : that all these proceedings were no other than preliminaries to the unheard of treatment which was reserved for a queen, whose virtues ought to have commanded respect, even from her enemies : that, from the hands of that august princess, the archives of the

state

state had been forced away by menaces and violences, notwithstanding the security which her majesty had promised herself under the protection of all laws, human and divine; and notwithstanding the repeated assurances given by the king of Prussia, that not only her person, and the place of her residence, should be absolutely safe, but that even the Prussian garrison should be under her direction: that a prince, who declared himself protector of the Protestant religion, had begun the war, by crushing the very state to which that religion owes its establishment, and the preservation of its most invaluable rights: that he had broke through the most respectable laws which constitute the union of the Germanic body, under colour of a defence which the empire stood in no need of, except against himself: and that the king of Prussia, while he insisted on having entered Saxony as a friend, demanded his army, the administration of his dominions, and, in a word, the sacrifice of his whole electorate.

Though this memorial made some impression at its first publication, yet this was soon effaced, at least in the minds of all sensible people, when the answer of his Prussian majesty appeared; and in which it was proved, that the charges of severity

brought against that monarch were some of them false; and all of them exaggerated; and that he could not have taken any other steps than those he actually embraced, without being guilty of the most egregious folly and imprudence.

While the Austrian and Prussian armies were in the field, their respective ministers were not idle at Ratisbon, where three Imperial decrees were issued against his Prussian majesty: the first, summoning that prince to withdraw his troops from the electorate of Saxony; the second, commanding all the vassals of the empire, employed by the king of Prussia, to quit that service immediately; and the third, forbidding the members of the empire to suffer any levies of soldiers, for the Prussian service, to be made within their respective jurisdictions.

The French minister declared to the dyet, that the proceedings of his Prussian majesty having discovered to the world the project formed between that prince and the king of England, to stir up in the empire a religious war, which might forward the accomplishment of their particular views, his most Christian majesty, in consequence of his engagements with the empress-queen, and many other princes of the empire, being

being determined to succour them in the most effectual manner, would forthwith send such a number of troops to their aid, as might be thought necessary to maintain the liberty of the Germanic body.

On the other hand, the Prussian minister signified to the dyet, that his master would very soon produce the proofs, that were come to his hands, of the plan concerted by the courts of Vienna and Dresden, for overthrowing his electoral house, and for subjecting him to a yoke, which seemed to threaten the whole empire.

About the same time, the Russian resident at the Hague, delivered to the States-general a declaration from his mistress, intimating, that her Imperial majesty was fully convinced, from the spirit of the memorial presented at the court of Vienna by the king of Prussia's envoy extraordinary, that that monarch intended to attack the territories of the empress-queen; in which case she (the czarina) was unavoidably obliged to succour her ally with all her forces; for which purpose she had ordered all her troops in Livonia to be forthwith assembled on the frontiers, and hold themselves in readiness to march at the first notice: that, moreover, the Russian admiralty had been commanded to provide immediately a sufficient

sufficient number of galleys for transporting a large body of forces to Lubec.

The ministers of the empress-queen, both at the Hague and at London, presented memorials to the States-general and to his Britannic majesty, demanding the succours which these two powers were bound, by the treaty of Aix la-Chapelle, to afford the house of Austria; a request, which, considering the late conduct of that princess, was offering an insult to the understanding of the people of England.

At the same time, the emperor concluded a new convention with the French king, regulating the succours he was to receive from that quarter: he claimed, in the usual form, the assistance of the Germanic body as guaranty of the pragmatic sanction and treaty of Dresden; and Sweden was also solicited to engage in the general confederacy.

The king of Prussia did not sit silent under the various imputations that were thrown upon his character. His minister at the Hague delivered a memorial in answer to that of the Saxon resident, in which he affirmed the court of Dresden had adopted every part of the scheme, which his enemies had formed for his destruction: that the Saxon ministers had, in all the courts
of

of Europe, employed every artifice in order to pave the way for the execution of their project : that they had endeavoured to put an odious construction upon his most innocent actions : that they had spared neither malicious insinuations, nor even the most atrocious calumnies, to alienate all the world from his majesty, and raise up enemies against him every where : that he had received information, that the court of Saxony intended to let his troops pass freely, and afterwards wait for events of which they might avail themselves, either by joining his enemies, or making a diversion in his dominions : that, in such a situation, he could not, without the most egregious folly, neglect the only means which were left him for preventing his inevitable ruin, by putting it out of the power of Saxony to encrease the number of his enemies : that all the measures he had pursued in that electorate were but the necessary consequences of the first resolution he was forced to take for his own preservation : that he had done nothing but deprived the court of Saxony of the means of hurting him ; and this had been done with all possible moderation : that the country enjoyed all the security and all the quiet, which could be expected in the very midst of peace ; the

Prus.

Prussian troops observing the most exact discipline : that all due respect was shewn to the queen of Poland, who had been persuaded, by the most suitable representations, to suffer some papers to be taken from the paper-office, of which his Prussian majesty had already copies ; and thought it necessary, to ascertain the dangerous designs of the Saxon ministry against him, to secure the originals ; the existence and reality of which might otherwise have been denied : that every man had a right to prevent the mischief, with which he was threatened, and to retort it upon its author : and that neither the constitutions nor the laws of the empire could obstruct the exercise of a right so superior to all others, as that of self-preservation and self-defence ; especially when the guardian of these laws was so closely united to the enemy as manifestly to abuse his power in her favour.

But the most important step, which his Prussian majesty took in his own vindication, was that of publishing another memorial, representing the conduct of the courts of Vienna and Saxony, and their dangerous designs against his person and government, together with the original papers adduced as proofs of these sinister intentions.

tentions. As a knowledge of these pieces * is necessary towards forming a distinct idea of the motives, which occasioned this dreadful war upon the continent, it will not be amiss to present the reader with their chief substance and purport.

His Prussian majesty affirmed, that, in order to understand the source of the vast plan, which the courts of Vienna and Saxony had been forming against him ever since the peace of Dresden, we must trace it as far back as the war which preceded this peace : that the sanguine hopes, which the two allied courts had conceived upon the success of the campaign in 1744, gave occasion to a treaty of eventual partition, stipulating, that the court of Vienna should obtain the dutchy of Silesia, and the county of Glatz ; while the king of Poland, elector of Saxony, should enjoy the dutchies of Magdebourg and Croissen, the circles of Zullichow and Swibus, together with the Prussian part of Lusatia : that, though after the peace of Dresden, concluded in the year 1745, there was no further reason for a treaty of this nature ; yet the court of

* These pieces shall be inserted at length at the end of the next volume, where the reader will see, by the sequel, they make their most proper appearance.

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Vienna proposed to that of Saxony a new alliance, in which the treaty of eventual partition should be renewed; but this last thought it requisite, in the first place, to render their plan more consistent, by founding it upon an alliance between the empress-queen and the czarina: that accordingly these two powers did, in fact, conclude a defensive alliance at Petersburg in the course of the ensuing year; but the body or ostensible part of this treaty was composed merely with a view to conceal from the knowledge of the public, six secret articles, the fourth of which was levelled singly against Prussia, according to the exact copy of it, which appeared among the documents: that, in this article, the empress queen of Hungary and Bohemia began, with a protestation, that she would inviolably adhere to the treaty of Dresden; but explained her real sentiments upon the subject, a little lower in the following terms: “If the king of Prussia should be the first to depart from this peace, by attacking either her majesty the empress queen of Hungary and Bohemia, or her majesty the empress of Russia, or even the republic of Poland; in all these cases, the right of the empress-queen to Silesia and the county of Glatz, should again revive, and recover their

their full effect; and the two contracting parties should mutually assist each other with sixty thousand men to reduce these countries:" that, from the face of this article it was evident, that every war, which could arise between him and Russia, or the republic of Poland, would be considered as a manifest infraction of the peace of Dresden, and a revival of the right of the house of Austria to Silesia; though neither Russia nor the republic of Poland were at all concerned in the treaty of Dresden; and though the latter, with which the king lived in the most intimate friendship, was not even in alliance with the court of Vienna: that, according to the principles of the law of nature, received among all civilized nations, the most the court of Vienna could be authorized to do in such cases, would be to send those succours to her allies, which were due to them by treaties, without her having the least pretence, on that account, to free herself from the particular engagements subsisting between her and the king: that he appealed to the judgment of the impartial world, whether, in this secret article, the contracting powers had kept within the bounds of a defensive alliance; or whether this article did not rather contain a plan of an offensive alliance against

the king of Prussia : that it was, besides, obvious, from this article, that the court of Vienna had devised three pretences for the recovery of Silesia ; and that she thought to attain her end, either by provoking the king to commence hostilities against her, or by exciting a war between his majesty and Russia by her secret intrigues and machinations : that the court of Saxony, being invited to engage in this alliance, eagerly accepted the invitation ; furnished its ministers at Petersburg with full powers for that purpose ; and ordered them to declare, that their master was willing to accede not only to the treaty itself, but also to the secret article against Prussia ; and to join in the regulations made by the two courts, provided effectual measures should be taken, as well for the security of Saxony, as for its indemnification and recompence, in proportion to the efforts and progress that might be made : that the court of Dresden declared, that, if, upon any fresh attack from the king of Prussia, the empress-queen should, by their assistance, not only reconquer Silesia, and the county of Glatz, but also reduce him within narrower bounds ; the king of Poland, as elector of Saxony, would abide by the partition formerly stipulated between him and the empress-queen :
that

that count Lofs, the Saxon minister at Vienna, was charged to open a private negotiation for settling an eventual partition of the conquests, which might be made on Prussia, by laying down, as the basis of it, the treaty of Leipzig, signed on the eighteenth day of May, in the year 1745; as would appear by the documents annexed: that it had been supposed, through the whole of this negotiation, that the king of Prussia should be the aggressor against the court of Vienna; but he insisted, that, even in this case, the king of Poland could have no right to make conquests on his Prussian majesty: that he acknowledged, indeed, that the court of Saxony had not yet acceded in form to the treaty of Petersburg; but its allies had been given to understand again and again, that it was ready to accede, without restriction, whenever this could be done without danger; and the advantages to be gained should be secured in its favour; circumstances proved by divers authentic documents, particularly by a letter from count Fleming to count de Bruhl, informing him, that count Uhlefeld had charged him to represent afresh to his court, that they could not take too secure measures against the ambitious views of the king of Prussia; and that Saxony

in particular, ought to be cautious, as being the most exposed: that it was of the highest importance to strengthen their old engagements upon the footing proposed by the late count de Harrach in the year 1745; a step, which might be taken on occasion of his Polish majesty's accession to the treaty of Petersburg: that the answer of count Bruhl to this dispatch imported, that the king of Poland was willing to treat, in the utmost secrecy, with the court of Vienna, about succours, by private and confidential declarations, relating to the fourth secret article of the treaty of Petersburg, on condition of reasonable terms and advantages, which, in this case, ought to be granted to his majesty: that the unwillingness of his Polish majesty to declare himself, until the king of Prussia should be attacked, and his forces divided, appeared from other dispatches; and that this scruple was admitted by the allies of Saxony: that from these premises he might fairly deduce this inference, that the court of Dresden, without having acceded in form to the treaty of Petersburg, was not less an accomplice in the dangerous designs, which the court of Vienna had grounded upon this treaty; and that having been dispensed with from a formal concurrence, it had only waited for that moment when

when it might, without running any great risk, concur in effect, and share the spoils of its neighbour : that, in expectation of this period, the Austrian and Saxon ministers laboured in concert and underhand, with the more ardour, to bring the *Casus Fœderis* into existence ; for it being laid down as a principle in the treaty, that any war whatever between him and Russia, would intitle the empress-queen to retake Silesia, there was nothing more to be done but to kindle such a war ; for which purpose no method was found more proper, than that of embroiling the king with the empress of Russia ; and provoking that princess, with all sorts of false insinuations, impostures, and the most atrocious calumnies, in laying to his majesty's charge a variety of designs, sometimes against Russia, and even the person of the czarina ; sometimes views upon Poland, and sometimes intrigues in Sweden : that, by these and other such contrivances, they had inflamed the animosity of the empress to such a degree, that, in a council held in the month of October, in the year 1755, she had resolved to attack the king of Prussia without any further discussion, whether he should fall upon any of the allies of Russia, or one of them should fall upon him ; a resolution, which,

for that time, was defeated by their want of seamen and magazines; but the preparations were continued, under pretence of keeping themselves in readiness to make good the engagements they had contracted in the last subsidiary convention with England, and when all were completed, the storm would fall on the king of Prussia.

This is the substance of that famous memorial published by his Prussian majesty, to which the justifying pieces of authentic documents were annexed; and to which an answer was pretended to be given by the partisans of her Imperial majesty. Specious reasons may, doubtless, be alledged on either side of almost any dispute, by writers of ingenuity: but on examining this contest, it must evidently appear, to every candid and unprejudiced person, that the courts of Vienna, Petersburg, and Dresden, had formed a plan, if not for ruining, at least for humbling his Prussian majesty; and that the means, employed by that monarch for disappointing this dangerous and cruel design, though somewhat rigorous and severe, were indispensably necessary for his own safety, and therefore justifiable by the great law of self-preservation.

About the latter end of November, the Saxon minister at Ratisbon delivered to
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the dyet a new and circumstantial memorial, representing the deplorable state of that electorate, and imploring afresh the assistance of the empire. The king of Prussia had also addressed a letter to his dyet, demanding succour of the several states, agreeable to the guaranties of the treaties of Westphalia, and Dresden: but the minister of Mentz, as director of the dyet, having refused to lay it before that assembly, the minister of Brandenburg ordered it to be printed, and sent to his court for further instructions. In the mean time his Prussian majesty thought proper to declare to the king and senate of Poland, that, should the Russian troops be suffered to march through that kingdom, he would not fail to retaliate on the territories of the republic.

In France the prospect of a bloody war, did not at all allay the animosity that prevailed between the clergy and parliament touching the bull *Unigenitus*. The king, being persuaded to espouse the ecclesiastical side of the question, received a brief from the pope, laying it down as a fundamental article, that whosoever refused to assent to the bull *Unigenitus* was in the way to damnation: and certain cases were specified, in which the sacraments are to be denied.

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The parliament of Paris, considering this brief or bull as a direct attack upon the rights of the Gallician church, issued an arret or decree suppressing the said bull; reserving to themselves the right of providing against the inconveniences with which it might be attended, as well as the privilege to maintain in their full force the prerogatives of the crown, the power and jurisdiction of the bishops, the liberties of the Gallician church, and the customs of the realm.

The king, dissatisfied with their interposition, declared his intention to hold a bed of justice in person at the palace. Accordingly, on the twelfth day of November, the whole body of his guards, consisting of ten thousand men, were drawn up in the city of Paris, and next day the king repaired with the usual ceremony to the palace where the bed of justice was held: among other regulations an edict was issued for suppressing the fourth and fifth chambers of inquests, the members of which had remarkably distinguished themselves by their opposition to the bull *Unigenitus*.

In England, the dearth of provisions, owing in a great measure to the iniquitous practice of engrossing, was so severely felt by the common people, that insurrections were raised in Shropshire and Warwickshire
by

by the populace, in conjunction with the colliers, who pillaged, without distinction, the millers, farmers, grocers and butchers, until they were dispersed by the gentlemen of the country at the head of their tenants and dependants.

Disorders of the same nature were excited by the colliers in the forest of Dean, and those employed in the works of Cumberland. The corporations, noblemen, and gentlemen, in different parts of the kingdom, exerted themselves strenuously for the relief of the poor; and a great council being assembled at St. James's on the same subject, a proclamation was issued for carrying the laws into speedy and effectual execution against the forestallers and engrossers of corn.

The fear of an invasion having now subsided, and Hanover being thought in more immediate danger than Great-Britain, the auxiliaries of that electorate were sent back to their own country. At the latter end of the season, when the weather became severe, the innkeepers of England refused to receive the Hessian soldiers into winter-quarters, as no provision had been made for that purpose by act of parliament; so that they were obliged to build huts in their camp, and remain in the open fields till January: but

but the rigour of this uncomfortable situation was softened by the hand of generous charity, which plentifully supplied them with all kinds of refreshment, and other conveniencies; a humane interposition, which rescued the national character from the imputation of cruelty and ingratitude, which it must otherwise have incurred.

On the second day of Decem̄ber, his majesty opened the session of parliament, with a speech, in which he expressed his hopes, that, under the guidance of divine providence, the union, fortitude, and affection of his people, would enable him to surmount all difficulties, and vindicate the dignity of his crown and the rights of his subjects against the antient enemy of Great-Britain. He said that the succour and preservation of America constituted a main object of his attention and sollicitude; and that the growing dangers, to which the British colonies might be exposed from the late losses in that country, demanded resolutions of vigour and dispatch: that an adequate and firm defence at home should maintain the chief place in his thoughts; and in this great view he had nothing so much at heart, as to remove all grounds of dissatisfaction from his people: that, for this end, he earnestly recommended to the
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care and diligence of the parliament the framing of a national militia, planned and regulated with equal regard to the just rights of his crown and people; an institution which might become one good resource in times of general danger: that the unnatural union of councils abroad, the calamities which, in consequence of this unhappy conjunction, might, by irruptions of foreign armies into the empire, shake its constitution, overturn its system, and threaten oppression to the Protestant interest on the continent, were events which must sensibly affect the minds of the British nation; and had fixed the eyes of Europe on this new and dangerous crisis: that the body of his electoral troops, which were brought hither at the desire of his parliament, he had now directed to return to his dominions in Germany, relying with pleasure on the spirit and zeal of his people, in defence of his person and realm: that he fully confided in the wisdom of his parliament, for preferring more vigorous efforts, though more expensive, to a less effectual, and therefore less frugal plan of war: that he had placed before them the dangers and necessities of the public; and it was their duty to lay the burdens they should judge unavoidable, in such a manner as would least distress and exhaust

exhaust his people : that he was heartily concerned for the sufferings of the poor, arising from the present dearth of corn, and for the disturbances to which it had given rise ; and hoped his parliament would consider of proper provisions for preventing the like mischiefs hereafter : that unprosperous events of war in the Mediterranean had drawn from his subjects signal proofs how dearly they tendered the honour of his crown ; and they could not, therefore, on his part, fail to meet with just returns of unwearied care, and unceasing endeavours for the glory, prosperity, and happiness of his people.

The king having withdrawn from the house of peers, the speech was read by the lord Sandys, appointed to act as speaker to that house ; then earl Gower proposed an address, which, however, was not carried without opposition. In one part of it his majesty was thanked for having caused a body of his electoral troops to come into England at the request of his parliament ; and this article was disagreeable to those who had disapproved of the measure in the last session : but, notwithstanding their utmost efforts, the address, including that paragraph, was voted by a considerable majority.

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In the address of the commons no such paragraph was inserted. As soon as the speaker had recited his majesty's speech, Mr. C. Townshend proposed the heads of an address, to which the house unanimously agreed; and it was presented accordingly. This necessary form was no sooner discussed, than the house, with a warmth of humanity and benevolence suitable to such an assembly, resolved itself into a committee to deliberate on that part of his majesty's speech which related to the dearth of corn, that so much distressed the poorer class of people. A bill was immediately framed, to prohibit for a time limited, the exportation of corn, malt, meal, flour, bread, biscuit and starch; and a resolution unanimously taken to address the sovereign, that an embargo might be forthwith laid upon all ships laden or to be laden with these commodities to be exported from the ports of Great Britain and Ireland.

At the same time vice-admiral Boscawen, from the board of admiralty, acquainted the house, that the king and the board having been dissatisfied with the conduct of admiral Byng, in a late action with the French fleet in the Mediterranean, and for the appearance of his not having acted agreeably to his instructions, for the relief of

Minorca, he was then in custody of the marshal of the admiralty, in order to be tried by a court-martial: that, although this was no more than what was usual in like cases, yet as admiral Byng was then a member of the house, and as his confinement might detain him some time from his duty there, the board of admiralty thought it a respect due to the house to inform them of the commitment and detention of the said admiral. This message being read, the house unanimously approved of the admiral's imprisonment, and of his majesty's resolution to bring him to a trial.

The committees of supply, and of ways and means, being named, took into consideration the public estimates, and made very ample provision for enabling his majesty to prosecute the war with the utmost vigour. They granted fifty-five thousand men for the sea-service, including eleven thousand four hundred and nineteen marines; and for the land-service forty-nine thousand seven hundred and forty-nine effective men, comprehending four thousand and eight invalids. The supply was granted for the maintenance of these forces, as well as for the troops of Hesse and Hanover; for the ordnance; the levy of new regiments; for assisting his majesty in forming
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and maintaining an army of observation ; for the just and necessary defence and preservation of his electoral dominions, and those of his allies, and towards enabling him to fulfil his engagements with the king of Prussia ; for the security of the empire against the irruption of foreign armies, as well as for the support of the common cause ; for building and repairs of ships, hiring transports, payment of half-pay officers, and the pensions of widows ; for enabling his majesty to discharge the like sum, raised in pursuance of an act passed in the last session of parliament, and charged upon the first aids or supplies to be granted in this session ; for enabling the governors and guardians of the hospital for the maintenance and education of exposed and deserted young children, to receive all such children, under a certain age, as should be brought to the said hospital within the compass of one year ; for maintaining and supporting the new settlement of Nova Scotia ; for repairing and finishing military roads ; for making good his majesty's engagements with the landgrave of Hesse-Cassel ; for the charge of marching, recruiting, and remounting German troops in the pay of Great-Britain ; for empowering his majesty to defray any

extraordinary expences of the war, incurred or to be incurred, for the service of the ensuing year, and to take all such measures as might be necessary to disappoint and defeat any enterprizes or designs of his enemies, as the exigencies of affairs should require; for the use and relief of his majesty's subjects in the several provinces of North and South Carolina and Virginia, in recompence for such services, as, with the approbation of his majesty's commander in chief in America, they had respectively performed, or should perform, either by putting these provinces in a posture of defence, or by acting with vigour against the enemy; for enabling the East-India company to defray the expence of a military force in their settlements, to be maintained in them, in lieu of a battalion of his majesty's forces withdrawn from those forts and factories; for the maintenance and support of the forts on the coast of Africa; for widening the avenues, and rendering more safe and commodious the streets and passages, leading from Charing-cross to the two houses of parliament, the courts of justice, and the new bridge of Westminster. Such were the articles under which we may specify the supplies of this year, amounting in the whole to eight millions three hun-

hundred fifty thousand three hundred and twenty five pounds nine shillings and three-pence.

In order to raise this immense sum, the commons imposed a land-tax at four shillings in the pound : they continued the duties on malt, mum, cyder, and perry : they established a lottery of one guinea tickets, for producing a sum not exceeding one million fifty thousand and five pounds five shillings ; one moiety of the value of the tickets to be divided into prizes for the benefit of the proprietors, and the other half to be applied to the use of the public : they resolved that the sum of two millions five hundred thousand pounds should be raised by annuities for lives, with the benefit of survivorship, or for terms of years certain, charged upon a fund to be established in this session of parliament for the payment thereof, and for which the sinking fund should be a collateral security. The conditions on which they intended to grant these annuities, being offered to the publick in the month of March, were so ill relished by the Jews and jobbers, that a very small sum had been subscribed within the time limited ; therefore the affair was again taken into consideration by the committee, and their resolutions were altered

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to the following purpose: that so much of the sum of two millions five hundred thousand pounds, proposed to be raised by annuities for lives, with the benefit of survivorship, or for terms of years certain, pursuant to the resolution of the house of the fourteenth of March, as had not been subscribed for within the time limited, amounting to the sum of two millions one hundred eighty six thousand and nine hundred pounds, should be raised by annuities at the rates of three pounds per cent. transferable at the bank of England, and redeemable by parliament, the said annuities to be paid by half-yearly payments; and that each contributor should, for every hundred pounds contributed, be intitled also to an annuity for life, after the rate of one pound two shillings and six pence per cent. to be paid in like manner; the first payment of both to be made on the fifth day of January 1758, if such contributors respectively should, on or before that time, have appointed their nominees, or upon such of the said half yearly days of payment as should be next after the respective appointment of their nominees; the said respective annuities to be charged upon the fund resolved to be established in this session of parliament, for payment of the

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annuities mentioned in the resolution of March the fourteenth, for which the sinking fund should be a collateral security; and that all such contributors should, on or before the fourth day of May, make a deposit with the cashiers of the bank of England of fifteen pounds for every hundred which they should choose to contribute, and should make the future payments on or before the times herein after limited; that is, ten pounds per cent. on or before the fourth day of June; fifteen per cent. on or before the seventh of July; fifteen per cent. on or before the eighteenth of August; fifteen per cent. on or before the twenty-first of September; fifteen per cent. on or before the tenth of November; and the remaining fifteen per cent. on or before the twenty-second day of December; that all persons who had already subscribed, pursuant to the resolution of March the fourteenth, and who, instead of the annuities therein mentioned, should choose to accept of the annuities proposed by this resolution, and who, on or before the fourth day of May, should, in books to be opened at the Bank for that purpose, express their consent thereunto, should, upon their compliance with the terms herein mentioned, for every hundred pounds so by them al-

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ready subscribed, be intitled to the said several annuities of three pounds, and one pound two shillings and six-pence; in which case the sum so by them already advanced, should be deemed part of their contribution for the purchase of the annuities hereby proposed; and that the sums so contributed should be paid by the cashiers of the Bank into the receipt of the exchequer, to be applied, from time to time, to such services as should then have been voted by the house in this session of parliament, and not otherwise.

The fund established for the payment of these annuities consisted of the surplus of the duties on licences for retailing spirituous liquors; an additional stamp duty of one shilling upon every indenture, lease, bond, or deed, written upon vellum, parchment, or paper, for which a stamp-duty of six-pence was payable by a former act of parliament; an additional stamp-duty of five pounds upon every licence for retailing wine, to be granted to those who should not take out licences for retailing spirits, beer, ale, or other exciseable liquors; an additional stamp-duty of four pounds for a wine licence to be granted to any person who should take out a licence for retailing beer, ale, and other exciseable liquors, but should
not

not take out a licence for retailing spirituous liquors; and an additional stamp-duty of forty shillings for a licence to retail wine, to be granted to any person who should take out a licence for retailing spirituous liquors: these licences to be taken out annually, and granted by the commissioners appointed for managing the duties arising by stamps upon vellum, parchment, and paper. They resolved to repeal the act for the better regulating the selling of wines by retail, and for preventing abuses in the mingling, corrupting, and adulterating of wines, and for fixing and limiting the prices of the same, except so much thereof as related to these abuses. They ordered, that, from the day of the repeal, which was the fifth of July, in the present year, the commission, whereby agents and commissioners were appointed to grant licences for retailing wine, should cease and determine: that, out of the several duties before mentioned, his majesty should be empowered to grant, during pleasure, to the said several agents or commissioners, and their officers, such yearly allowances as he should think proper, so as not to exceed the present annual amount of their salaries: and that, after the determination of the former duties upon wine-licences, his majesty should receive from the new du-

duties a sum equal to the produce of the former.

The annual funds were moreover augmented by additional duties on news-papers, advertisements, almanacks or kalendars, and Newcastle coals exported beyond seas to any country, except Ireland, the isle of Man, and the British plantations.

Towards the supply for the ensuing year the house likewise resolved to apply one million two hundred thousand pounds from the sinking-fund; the savings out of the grants made this session, for the pay of the Hanoverian troops in the service of Great-Britain; the surplus of the duties on licences, and of the grants for the preceding year remaining in the exchequer; and one million to be raised by loans, or exchequer-bills, to be charged on the first aids granted in the next session of parliament.

Bills being framed on these resolutions, were passed into laws without opposition. The sums allotted by the committee of supply, did not exceed eight millions three hundred fifty-thousand three hundred twenty five pounds nine shillings and threepence; the funds established amounted to eight millions six hundred eighty-nine thousand fifty-one pounds nineteen shillings and seven pence; so that there was an overplus of three

three hundred thirty eight thousand seven hundred and twenty-six pounds ten shillings and four pence; an excess, which was deemed necessary, in case the lottery, which was founded on a new plan, should prove deficient,

The article of supply for maintaining the army of observation, was owing to a message signed by his majesty, and presented by Mr. Pitt, a gentleman of distinguished abilities and incorruptible integrity, who, to the great satisfaction of the whole nation, had lately been promoted to the office of principal secretary of state. He now imparted to the house an intimation from his majesty, importing, that it was always with the utmost reluctance that his majesty asked extraordinary supplies of his people; but as the united councils, and formidable preparations of France and her allies, threatened Europe with civil and religious slavery, and as these cruel and pernicious designs were particularly levelled against his majesty's electoral dominions, and those of his good ally the king of Prussia, his majesty hoped, from the known zeal and affection of his faithful commons, that they would chearfully assist him in forming and maintaining an army of observation for the just and necessary defence and preservation

tion of those territories, and enable him to fulfil his engagements with his Prussian majesty for the security of the empire against the irruption of foreign forces, and for the support of the common cause.

This message met with as favourable a reception, as could possibly have been wished. It was read in the house of commons; together with a copy of the treaty between his majesty and the king of Prussia, including the secret and separate article, and the declaration signed on each side by the plenipotentiaries at Westminster: the request was granted, and the convention approved. With equal alacrity did they gratify his majesty's desire, signified in another message, delivered on the seventeenth day of May by lord Bateman, importing, that, in this critical conjuncture, emergencies might arise of the utmost importance, and be productive of the most pernicious consequences, if proper means should not be immediately employed to prevent and defeat them; his majesty therefore hoped, that the house would enable him to defray any extraordinary expences of the war, incurred or to be incurred for the service of the current year; and to take all such measures as might be necessary to disappoint and defeat any enterprizes or designs of his enemies, as the exigency of affairs might

might require. The committee of supply forthwith granted a very large sum for these purposes, including the charge of German auxiliaries. A like message being at the same time communicated to the upper house, their lordships presented a very loyal address on the occasion; and when the article of supply, which it produced among the commons, came under their consideration, they unanimously agreed to it, by way of a clause of appropriation.

We have already observed, that the first bill passed by the commons in this session was for the relief of the poor, by prohibiting the exportation of corn: but this expedient not having had the desired effect, another bill was now prepared, remitting, for a limited time, the duty then payable upon foreign corn and flour imported; as also allowing, for a certain term, all such foreign corn, grain, meal, bread, biscuit, and flour, as had been or should be taken from the enemy, to be landed and sold in the kingdom duty free. In order still more to reduce the high price of corn, and to prevent any supply of provisions from being sent to our enemies in America, a third bill was framed, prohibiting, for a time therein limited, the exportation of corn, grain, meal, malt, flour, bread, biscuit, starch, beef,

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beef, pork, bacon, or other viſual, from any of the Britiſh plantations, unleſs to Great-Britain or Ireland, or from one colony to another. To this act, which was to remain in force during the continuation of the war, two clauſes were added, permitting thoſe neceſſaries, mentioned above, to be imported in foreign built ſhips, and from any ſtate in amity with his majeſty, either into Great-Britain or Ireland; and for exporting from Southampton or Exeter to the Iſle of Man, for the uſe of the inhabitants, a quantity of wheat, barley, oats, meal, or flour, not exceeding two thouſand five hundred quarters.

The commons would have given a ſtill farther proof of their humanity, had they contrived and eſtabliſhed ſome effectual method to puniſh thoſe unfeeling villains, who, by engroſſing and boarding up great quantities of grain, had occaſioned this artificial ſcarcity, and deprived their fellow-creatures of bread, while the earth produced abundance for their ſubſiſtence. Upon another report of the committee, the houſe reſolved, that, to prevent the high price of wheat and bread, no ſpirits ſhould be diſtilled from wheat for a limited time. While the bill, framed on this reſolution, was under conſideration, a petition was delivered to the

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house by the brewers of London, Westminster, Southwark, and parts adjacent, representing, that, when the resolution passed, the price of malt, which was before too high, immediately rose to such a degree, that the petitioners found themselves utterly disabled from carrying on business, at the price malt then bore, owing, as they imagined, to an apprehension of the necessity under which the distillers would be to make use of the best pale malt, and substitute the best barley in lieu of wheat: that, in such a case, the markets would not be able to supply a sufficient quantity of barley for the demands of both professions, besides other necessary uses: they therefore prayed, that, in regard to the public revenue, to which the trade of the petitioners so largely contributed, proper measures might be taken for preventing the public loss, and relieving their particular distress. The house was convinced of the equity of this remonstrance; and the members appointed to prepare the bill, were immediately enjoined to make provision in it to restrain, for a limited time, the distilling of barley, malt, and all grain whatsoever. The bill was framed accordingly; but did not pass without violent opposition. Against this prohibition it was alledged, that there are always

large quantities of wheat and barley in the kingdom so much damaged, as to be unfit for any use but the distillery; and that consequently a restriction of this nature would ruin many farmers, and others employed in the trade of malting. Particular interests, however, must often be sacrificed to the welfare of the public; and the present distress prevailed over the prospect of this disadvantage. If they had permitted any sort of grain to be distilled, it would have been impossible to prevent the distilling of every kind. The prohibition was restricted to two months; but at the expiration of that term, the scarcity still continuing, it was protracted by a new bill to the eleventh day of December, with a proviso, empowering his majesty to put an end to it at any time after the eleventh day of May, if such a step should be judged for the advantage of the kingdom.

The next object, that engaged the attention of the commons, was a bill for the establishment of a national militia*; a measure

* This bill enacted, that the lieutenants of counties should appoint deputy lieutenants to the number of twenty or more for each county, every deputy possessing an estate of four hundred a year, or being heir apparent

fare of the utmost consequence to the welfare of the public. This scheme had frequently

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apparent to a possession worth double that sum: that the lieutenant shall command the militia of his own county, and grant commissions to lieutenant-colonels, majors, and other officers, whose names should be certified to the king: that the qualification of a lieutenant-colonel should be three hundred pounds a year in actual possession, or double that estate in reversion: that a captain should possess two hundred pounds per annum, or be heir to four hundred, or son to a person who possesses, or did possess at his death, a fortune amounting to six hundred pounds a year: that the enjoyment of one hundred pounds per annum should be a sufficient qualification for a lieutenant, or his being the son of a man who possesses, or did at his death possess two hundred; that of an ensign not exceeding the half of that value: that majors, captains, lieutenants, and ensigns might be promoted on extraordinary occasions: that the king might displace any deputy-lieutenant or officer, and the lieutenant appoint others in their stead: that every deputy or officer should give in his qualification to the clerk of the peace, and take the oaths to the government within six months after he shall begin to act, under the penalty of two hundred pounds to be paid by all above the degree of captain, and of one hundred pounds by those of an inferior rank: that peers should be exempted from serving by themselves or their substitutes: but they and their heirs-apparent might be appointed deputy-lieutenants, or commission officers; and their qualifications in that case needed not be left with the clerk of the peace; but, on taking the oaths, they might act without being

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quently been attempted in former sessions ;
but had always been attended with such
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ing otherwise qualified : that a commission in the militia should not vacate a seat in parliament : that at the end of four years a number of officers should be discharged, equal to the number of those, who, being duly qualified, should solicit for admission : that each regiment should be provided with an adjutant who had served in the regular forces, and retain his rank in the army ; and every company should be supplied with two serjeants or more from the standing army ; who should be intitled to the hospital at Chelsea ; and serjeants appointed from that hospital should be re-admitted on producing certificates of their good behaviour : that every county in England and Wales should be obliged to find a certain number of men, according to the proportions therein specified ; and that to eighty private men, there should be no more than one captain, one lieutenant, and one ensign : that the lieutenant of each county, with two deputy lieutenants, or three or more deputy-lieutenants, in the absence of the lieutenant, should meet on the twelfth day of July in the present year, and on the first Tuesday in June of every subsequent year ; and require the head constables to deliver in a list of all the men between the age of eighteen and fifty, in their several districts, except peers, officers of the militia, officers of the regular forces, or garrisons, members of either university, clergymen, teachers of separate meetings, peace and parish officers, articulated clerks, apprentices, and seamen, noting in the list all labouring under any bodily infirmity : that every deputy-constable, or other petty officer, should transmit to the head constable,

numberless difficulties, and such a competition of interests, that it had ever proved abortive.

constable, the list of his division, having first affixed it to the door of the church, or chapel, for one Sunday: that, on the day appointed for receiving these lists, the lieutenants and deputy lieutenants should settle the number to be taken from each hundred or division of the county: that they should then subdivide themselves, and three or more deputies, or two deputies with one justice of the peace, or one deputy with two justices, should meet within a month in every such division, to hear the remonstrances of those who think themselves intitled to exemption, and, upon any just cause, correct their lists: that they should settle the number to be raised in each parish, and chuse the individuals by lot: that, within three weeks afterwards, the person so chosen should take the oaths, and enter into the militia for three years, or bring a man to serve as his substitute: or, lastly, forfeit ten pounds, and be liable, at the end of three years, to serve again: that the deputies and justices, according to the fore-mentioned proportion, should meet occasionally in their several subdivisions, and annually on the Tuesday before Michaelmas; then, if any person thirty-five years old, or any person whatsoever, should desire his discharge, and shew just cause for it, they should grant his request, and choose another by lot in his room; the vacation by death to be filled up in the same manner: that a militia-man removing to another parish, should serve the remainder of his time in his new settlement: that new lists of men, qualified for service, should be made annually: that a new body be chosen every third year, so that all persons du-
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abortive. It had been a constant source of dispute and contention between the crown and

ly qualified, might serve in their turns; and a list of the persons serving in each parish should be transmitted to the lieutenant: that any officer neglecting to return his list, or making a false or partial list, should be committed for a month to the common gaol, or pay a fine not exceeding five pounds, nor under forty shillings: that every private man, serving for himself, should be exempted from statute-work, from serving peace or parish offices, or in the regular forces; and he that had served three years, should not serve again, until it should come to his turn by rotation: that married men, having personally served in the militia, if called out in case of invasion or rebellion, should be intitled to the same privilege of setting up trades in any place of Great-Britain and Ireland, as by act of parliament is granted to mariners and soldiers: that a quaker, refusing to serve, should hire another man in his stead; and if he neglects, a sum should be levied upon him by distress sufficient for that purpose: that, within one month after the return of the lists, the lieutenant and two deputies, or three deputies without the lieutenant, should form the militia of each county into regiments, consisting of not more than twelve, nor less than seven companies, of forty men each, appointing the officers to each company; that on the first Monday in the months of March, April, May, June, July, August, September, and October, they should be exercised in half companies; and once every year on the Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, of Whitfun-week, in whole regiments: that no man should be

and the commons ; but now both appeared to concur in rendering it serviceable to the com-

exercised in half company or company, more than six miles from his own house : that notice of the time and place of meeting should be sent by the lieutenants or deputies to the high constables, who should fix it upon the doors of their respective churches : that the lieutenant of the county should appoint, at pleasure, a regimental clerk, a serjeant-major, and a drum-major : that, should it be thought inconvenient, on account of fairs or markets, to exercise the militia on the day fixed by this act, order might be made by three deputies, or two deputies and one justice, or one deputy and three justices, for exercising them on any other days, Sundays excepted : that in counties where the militia does not amount to seven companies, or one regiment, they should be formed into a battalion under the lieutenant and one field officer ; one adjutant being a subaltern in the army, a serjeant-major, a drum-major, and a clerk should be appointed for them, and they should be exercised as a compleat regiment ; but where a whole or half company cannot be assembled, they might be exercised in smaller parties, as the lieutenant or deputies should direct : that one commissioned officer should attend the exercise of the half company, and inspect their arms and accoutrements : that the arms and cloaths of the militia should be carefully kept by the captain of each company, in chests provided by the parish where they are deposited ; and the muskets be marked with an M and the name of the county : that the king's lieutenants or colonels should have the power to seize or remove, whether they should think proper, the arms, cloaths, and

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community; though some acquiesced in the project, who were, by no means, hearty in its favour.

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accoutrements, when necessary to the public peace: that any person intrusted with the custody of any arms or cloaths, delivering them out, unless for exercise, or by command of his superior officer, or by order of any justice of the peace, under his hand and seal, might, by two justices, be committed to the county gaol for six months: that no pay, arms, or cloathing, should be issued, nor an adjutant or serjeant be appointed, until four fifths of the men should have been chosen, and the officers have taken out their commissions: that the officer who superintends the exercise should call over the list, and certify to a justice the names of those who may be absent from exercise: that the justice should examine the excuse offered, and, should it be insufficient, punish the defaulter for the first offence by a fine of two shillings, or setting him in the stocks for one hour; for the second, fine him double the sum, or send him for four days to the house of correction; exact six shillings for every subsequent offence, or commit him to the house of correction for any time not exceeding one month: that every man, convicted by oath before a justice of being drunk at the time of exercise, should forfeit ten shillings, or sit an hour in the stocks: that every man convicted in the same manner of insolence or disobedience to his officers, should, for his first offence, pay two shillings and six-pence; and, in default of payment, be sent to the house of correction for four days; for the second, be fined double that sum, or committed for seven days; and for every offence afterwards, be fined in forty shillings, and committed

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GEORGE II. 1709

On the fourth day of December, a motion was made for the bill, by colonel George

to the house of correction for any time not exceeding one month, and not less than a fortnight: that any man who shall sell, pawn, or lose his arms, or accoutrements, should be fined a sum not exceeding three pounds; or, in default of payment, be committed to the house of correction for one month; and if he cannot then raise the sum, for three months: that he who shall neglect to return his arms in good order, after exercise, the same or the next day, shall pay a fine of two shillings and six-pence, and be sent to the house of correction for seven days; if he neglects to return them by Monday after Whitsun week, he shall forfeit four shillings, or be sent to the house of correction for fourteen days; and the person intrusted by the captain with the care of the arms and cloaths, omitting to complain of such neglect, shall forfeit twenty shillings: that any soldier or non-commissioned officer, absenting himself from his annual exercise, should forfeit ten shillings a day, or be committed for one month to the house of correction: that any non-commissioned officer, convicted upon oath of being negligent in his duty, disobedient or insolent to the adjutant, or other superior officer, should be fined by a justice in a sum not exceeding thirty shillings; or, in default of payment, be committed for fourteen days to the house of correction, from whence he may be discharged by the lieutenant: that any person, unlawfully buying or receiving any arms or accoutrements belonging to the militia, should incur the penalty of five pounds; in default be imprisoned for three months, or publicly whipped at the discretion of

George Townshend, eldest son of the lord viscount Townshend, a gentleman, not more

of the justice: that no man should be censured for absence occasioned by attending an election: that the militia should be subject, in military affairs, to their own officers; and, in civil affairs, to the civil magistrate: that all parish officers should assist the lieutenant and justices: that, in case of actual invasion, or upon imminent danger thereof, or in case of rebellion, the king, first notifying the occasion to parliament, if then sitting, or, in their recess, to the privy council, and to the people by proclamation, might direct the lieutenant, or any three deputy lieutenants for each county, to draw out their regiments, which should march by his majesty's order to any part of the kingdom, under the command of such generals as he should appoint; the militia receiving in this time of service the same pay given to the regular regiments of foot, and their officers holding the same rank with the regular officers of the same denomination: that the militia, during the time of service, should be liable to the law martial then subsisting; and that any man wounded, should be intitled to the provision of Chelsea hospital; but a militia man, not appearing, or refusing to march on such an occasion, should forfeit forty pounds, or be committed to the county gaol for twelve months: that in case of actual invasion, or upon imminent danger thereof, and in case of rebellion, if the parliament be not sitting, nor its adjournment or prorogation to expire in fourteen days, the king might summon it to meet on any day, upon giving fourteen days notice; and they should meet accordingly for the dispatch of business: that
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more distinguished by the abilities of his head, than the virtues of his heart.

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the militia and regular troops should be tried in courts martial, each by their own officers; and that the militia, during their annual exercise, should be billeted as regular troops: that in case of invasion or rebellion, the justices, in consequence of an order from the king, or any chief commission officer of the militia, should issue warrants to the chief constables or hundreds, to provide carriages for the arms, cloaths, accoutrements, powder, &c. which carriages should be payed for in ready money by the officer demanding them, after the following rates; one shilling per mile for a waggon with five horses, or a wain with six oxen, or with four oxen and two horses; ninepence per mile for a cart with four horses; and so in proportion: persons having such carriages were required to furnish them for one day's journey only; and any chief constable, neglecting his duty in the premises, was made liable to a fine not exceeding forty shillings, nor less than the half of that sum, to be levied by distress: that the militia should not be, on any occasion, compelled to march out of the kingdom: that in all cities and towns, which are counties in themselves, and have been accustomed to raise their own militia, the lieutenant or chief magistrate should appoint five deputy-lieutenants, to exercise the same power vested in the other deputies: that in these smaller counties the qualification for deputies, colonels, lieutenant-colonels and majors, shall be for each a possession in land to the value of three hundred pounds a year, or a personal estate amounting to five thousand pounds: that every captain should possess

The motion being approved, the task of preparing the bill was allotted to the proposer,

less half that fortune; and every lieutenant or ensign have fifty pounds yearly rent, or seven hundred and fifty pounds personal estate: that one half of the real estates possessed by the officer of county towns, must be in such city or town, or within the county at large, to which that city or town is united, for the purposes of this act: that the penalty for acting, if not qualified, should be one hundred pounds for a deputy-lieutenant or field-officer, and half that sum for all under: that all fines and forfeitures should be paid to the regimental clerk, and formed into a common stock in each sub-division, of which an account should be given to three deputies, or two deputies and one justice, or one deputy and two justices, who should apply it to the erection of butts, and the provision of gunpowder to be used in shooting at marks; the remainder to be distributed in prizes to the best marksmen, or employed in any other way for the use of the militia: that persons committed to the house of correction upon this act, should be kept to hard labour: that proof of qualification, in all suits, should lie on the defendant; and no order made, by virtue of this act, by a lieutenant, deputy, or justice, should be removed by certiorari, nor execution be superseded thereby: that where a parish extends into two counties, its militia should serve in that county where the church stands: that those who are trained and mustered in the docks, should not serve in the militia: that all former acts, relating to the militia, should be repealed by this act, except in cases which are herein directed to be subject

poser, and a considerable number of the most able members in the house, including his own brother, Mr. Charles Townsend, who, to his immortal honour, has always been extremely active in promoting this and every other scheme, that can tend to the interest of his country.

While the bill remained under consideration of the house, a petition for a constitutional and well-regulated militia was presented by the mayor, jurats, and commonalty of the king's town and parish of Maidstone in Kent, in common-council assembled. At the same time remonstrances were offered by the Protestant dissenting ministers, of all denominations, in and about the cities of London and Westminster; by the Protestant dissenters of Shrewsbury; the dissenting ministers of Devonshire; the Protestant dissenters, being freeholders and burgesses of the town, and county of the town of Nottingham, joined with other inhabitants of the church of England; expressing their apprehension, that, in the bill then depending, it might be proposed to enact, that the said militia should be exercised

to a former act: finally, that this act should remain in force for the term of five years. The other clauses contain provisions, respecting the privileges or conveniencies of particular places.

exercised on the Lord's day, commonly called Sunday; and praying, that no clause for such purpose might pass into a law.

The commons, unwilling to give any offence, even to the most scrupulous consciences, and being desirous to remove every plausible objection to the passing of the bill, appointed Monday as the day of exercise, and, at the same time, inserted some necessary clauses for the relief of the quakers.

Another petition and counter-petition were delivered by the magistrates, freeholders, and burgeses of the town of Nottingham, in relation to their particular franchises; which were accordingly considered in framing the bill.

After mature deliberation, and various alterations, it was carried through the lower house, and sent to the lords for their concurrence. There it underwent some important amendments, by one of which the number of militia-men was reduced to one half of what the commons had proposed; namely, to thirty two thousand three hundred and forty men, for the whole kingdom of England and Wales. The amendments, being considered in the lower house, met with some opposition, and several conferences were held with their lordships:

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at length, however, the two houses agreed to every article, and the bill was soon confirmed by the royal sanction. No provision, however, was made for cloaths, arms, accoutrements and pay : had clauses been insisted for these purposes, the act would have become a money bill, in which case the lords could have made no amendment.

In order therefore to prevent any differences between the two houses, on the point of disputed privileges, and to leave the peers at full liberty to make what amendments they should think proper, the commons resolved to settle the expence of the militia in a subsequent bill, during the following session, when they should be able, with more certainty, to know what sum would be necessary for these purposes. The bill, however excellent as it is, seems yet to be crude and indigested ; and the promoters of it were sufficiently sensible of its defects : but they were apprehensive, that, had they insisted upon every material article, the scheme, in the end, might have been entirely defeated. They were eager to seize this opportunity of trying an experiment, which might afterwards be improved to a greater national advantage ; and therefore they agreed to many restrictions and

limitations, to which, in other circumstances, they would never have assented.

The next measure, that was projected by the commons, was rendered necessary by the inhospitable perseverance of the publicans and innholders, who conceived themselves bound by no law to receive into their houses any foreign troops ; and accordingly refused quarters to the Hessian auxiliaries, who began to suffer greatly from the severity of the weather.

In order to remedy this inconvenience, a new law was now enacted in their favour, intituled, a bill to make provision for quartering the foreign troops that were in the kingdom, prepared by lord Barrington, the chancellor of the Exchequer, and the solicitor-general, and immediately passed without opposition.

This point being carried, another bill was introduced for the regulation of marine-forces, while ashore. This differed from the mutiny act in no other respect than this, that it impowered the admiralty to grant commissions for holding general courts-martial, and to do every thing, and in the same manner, as his majesty is impowered to do by the usual mutiny bill ; therefore it passed by the unanimous consent of the house.

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The same favourable reception was given to a bill for the more speedy and effectual recruiting his majesty's land-forces and marines; a law, which, however unpopular, was, in the present circumstances of the nation, deemed indispensably necessary. By this bill all justices of the peace, commissioners of the land tax, magistrates of corporations and boroughs, were impowered to meet by direction of the secretary at war, communicated in precepts issued by the high sheriffs, or their deputies, within their respective divisions, and at their usual place of meeting, to qualify themselves for the execution of the act: then they were ordered to appoint the times and places for their succeeding meetings; to issue precepts to the proper officers for these succeeding meetings; and to give notice of the time and place of every meeting to such military officer, as, by orders from the secretary at war, should be commanded to attend that service.

At these meetings the commissioners were impowered to receive all such men, as should voluntarily offer to enlist in his majesty's service on or before the first day of May; and, upon their being approved by the military officer attending, to gratify each volunteer with a bounty of three pounds,

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pounds, to be payed by the receiver general or collector of the land-tax out of the money in his hands; the person thus inlitting being entitled to his discharge, at the expiration of three years, if the war should then be ended, otherwise at the final conclusion of hostilities.

They were also impowered to impress into the service all able-bodied, idle, and disorderly persons, who did not follow and industriously prosecute some lawful occupation, or had not any visible means of subsistence. For this purpose they were vested with power to make search for and apprehend all such persons as should appear to be within the description of the act: even church-wardens, and other parish and town-officers, enjoyed this power, without deriving any authority from the commissioners. It was likewise ordained, that all men so apprehended, and adjudged by the commissioners, at their next meeting, to be within the description of the act, if approved of by the military officer in attendance, should be delivered over to the said officer, who should pay twenty shillings, or, if such impressed man had a wife or family, a sum not exceeding forty shillings, to be applied to the use of the parish; unless there was an informer, who, in that case,

case, would be intitled to ten shillings of the money.

It was moreover enacted, that none should be impressed but able-bodied men, free from raptures or bodily infirmity, not a reputed Papist, nor under the size of five feet four inches, or short of seventeen years of age, or turned of five and forty, or possessed of a vote in the election of a member to serve in parliament for any place in Great-Britain. A person, thus impressed, was, at the end of five years, or conclusion of the war, intitled to his discharge: but no private soldier, duly enlisted by this act, might, during the time of his residence in Great-Britain, be discharged without the consent of the colonel, or field-officer commanding the regiment, in writing under his hand and seal; or, if a marine, without the consent of the admiralty; the officer, discharging him in any other manner, being liable to be cashiered.

The bounty-money, advanced by the commissioners of the land tax, was ordered to be repaid into the Exchequer by the respective paymasters of the forces; and the time of the bill's continuing in force was limited to the end of the next session of parliament; such a short term being prescribed for volunteers to enter, because it was necessary

cessary to complete the regiments by the first of May; and the legislature rightly judged, that such a limitation would induce all those, that might think themselves in danger of being impressed, to enter voluntarily before that day, in order to intitle themselves to the bounty granted by parliament.

The next measure, embraced by the commons, was a bill for preventing the embezzlement of goods and apparel by those with whom they were entrusted, and putting a stop to the pernicious practice of gaming in public houses. By this act a penalty was denounced against pawnbrokers, in a summary way, for receiving goods, knowing them not to be the property of the pledger, and pawned without the authority of the owner. It was decreed that persons pawning, exchanging, or disposing of goods, without leave of the owner, should suffer in the penalty of twenty shillings; and, on non-payment, be committed for fourteen days to hard labour; afterwards, if the money could not then be paid, be whipped publicly in the house of correction, or such other place as the justice of peace should appoint, on publication of the prosecutor: that every pawnbroker should make entry of the person's name and place
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of abode who pledges any goods with him; and the pledger, if he required it, should have a duplicate of that entry: that a pawnbroker, receiving linnen or apparel, intrusted to others to be washed or mended, should forfeit double the sum lent upon it, and restore the goods: that upon oath of any person, whose goods were unlawfully pawned or exchanged, the justice should issue a warrant to search the suspected person's house; and, upon refusal of admittance, the officer might break open the door: that goods, pawned for any sum not exceeding ten pounds, might be recovered within two years, the owner making oath of the pawning, and tendering the principal, interest, and charges: that goods remaining unredeemed for two years, should be forfeited and sold, the overplus to be accounted for to the owner on demand.

With regard to gaming, the bill enacted, that all publicans suffering journeymen, labourers, servants, or apprentices to game with cards, dice, shuffle boards, mississippi, or billiard tables, skittles, nine pins, &c, should forfeit forty shillings for the first offence, and for every subsequent offence ten pounds should be levied by distress.

Many inconveniences having arisen from the interposition of justices, who, in consequence

quence of an act of parliament passed in the present reign, assumed the right of fixing rates for the payment of wages to weavers, several petitions were offered to the house of commons, representing the bad effects of such an establishment; and although these arguments were answered and opposed in counter-petitions, the commons, influenced by a laudable concern for the interest of the woollen manufacture, after mature deliberation, removed the grievance by a new bill, repealing so much of the former act as impowered justices of the peace to establish rates for the payment of wages.

It likewise ordained, that all contracts and agreements, made between clothiers and weavers, in respect to wages, should, from and after the first of May 1757, be good and valid, notwithstanding any rate established, or to be established: but that these contracts or agreements should extend only to the actual prices or rates of workmanship or wages, and not the payment thereof in any other manner than in money: and that if any clothier should refuse or neglect to pay the weaver the wages or price stipulated in money, within two days after the work should be completed and delivered, the same being demanded, he should forfeit

forfeit forty shillings for every such offence.

It must be acknowledged, to the honour of this parliament, that they were extremely ready to adopt any scheme, that seemed in any manner, calculated for the interest of the nation. The society of the free British fishery presented a petition, importing, that they had employed the sum of one hundred thirty thousand three hundred and five pounds eight shillings and sixpence, together with the entire produce of their fish, and all the moneys arising from the several branches allowed on the tonnage of their shipping, and on the exportation of their fish, in carrying on the said fishery: that, from their being obliged, in the infancy of their undertaking, to incur a much larger expence, than was, at that time, foreseen, they now found themselves such considerable losers, as to be utterly incapable of carrying on the fisheries with any prospect of success, unless assisted by the farther bounty of parliament: that they therefore, hoped, that, towards enabling them to prosecute the fisheries, they might have liberty to make use of such nets, as they should find best adapted to the said fisheries; each buss carrying to sea the same quantity and depth of netting, which, by the fishery acts, they

were then bound to carry: that the bounty of thirty shillings per ton, allowed by the said acts on the vessels employed in the fishery, might be encreased; and, in as much as many of the stock-proprietors were unable to advance any farther sum for carrying on this branch of commerce, and others unwilling, in the present situation, and under the present restraints, to venture any further sum in the undertaking, that the stock of the society, by the said acts made unalienable, except in case of death or bankruptcy, for a term of years, might forthwith be made transferable: and that the petitioners might be at liberty, between the intervals of the fishing seasons, to employ the busses in such a manner as they should find for the interest of the society.

About the same time, another petition was presented by the free British fishery-chamber of Whitehaven in Cumberland, alleging that, as the law then stood, they went to Shetland, and returned at a great expence and loss of time; and while the war continued, durst not stay there to fish, besides being exposed to the most imminent danger, by going and returning without convoy: that, ever since the institution of the present fishery, experience had fully evinced, that the fishery of Shetland was not worth following,

lowing, as thereby the petitioners had lost two months of a much better fishery in St. George's channel, within one day's sail of Whitehaven: and that they, therefore, hoped, that Campbel-town in Argyleshire would be appointed the place of rendezvous for the busses belonging to Whitehaven for the summer, as well as the winter fishery, that they might be enabled to fish with greater advantage.

The committee, having considered the substance of both petitions, resolved, that the petitioners should be at liberty to use such nets as they shall think best suited to the white herring fishery: that the bounty of thirty shillings per ton, should be raised to fifty, that the petitioners should be allowed, during the intervals of the fishing seasons, to employ their vessels in any other lawful business, provided they had been employed in the herring fishery during the proper seasons: that they might use such barrels for packing the fish as they then used, or might hereafter find most convenient for that purpose: that they should have liberty to make use of any waste or uncultivated land, one hundred yards at least, above high water mark, for the purpose of drying their nets: and that Campbel town, in Argyleshire, should, for the future, be the place for the

rendezvous of the buffes belonging to Whitehaven. This last resolution, however, was not inserted in the bill, which contained the other five, and in a little time was confirmed by the royal sanction.

So intricate is the machine of government, so difficult is it frequently to distinguish, what is really advantageous and what prejudicial to a country, that it is no wonder if public ministers should sometimes be at a loss to know whether they ought to embrace or reject any scheme that is offered to their consideration. The society of merchant adventurers in the city of Bristol, delivered a petition to the house of commons, alledging, that great quantities of bar iron were imported into Great-Britain, from Sweden, Russia, and other parts, chiefly purchased with ready money, some of which iron was exported again to Africa and other places; and the rest manufactured by the artificers.

They asserted that bar iron, imported from North America, would answer the same purposes; and the importation of it tend not only to the great advantage of the kingdom, by increasing its shipping and navigation; but also to the benefit of the British colonies; that, by an act passed in the twenty-third year of his present majesty's

fy's reign, the importation of bar iron from America into the port of London duty free, was permitted; but its being carried coastways, or farther by land than ten miles, had been prohibited; so that several very considerable manufacturing towns were deprived of the use of American iron, and the out ports prevented from employing it in their export commerce: they requested, therefore, that bar iron might be imported from North America into Great Britain, duty free, by all his majesty's subjects.

This request being supported by many other petitions from different parts of the kingdom, other classes of men, who thought the scheme would prove hurtful to their interests, took the alarm; and, in divers counter-petitions, represented the many ill consequences that would arise from its being enacted into a law. Pamphlets were published on both sides of the question, and violent disputes were excited upon this subject, which was justly deemed a matter of national importance.

The opposers of the bill alledged, that large quantities of iron were produced at home, and employed multitudes of poor people, there being no less than one hundred and nine forges in England and Wales

besides those erected in Scotland, the whole producing about eighteen thousand tons of iron: that as the mines in Great Britain are inexhaustible, the produce would of late years have been considerably encreased, had not the manufacturers been deterred from extending their works, and others discouraged from engaging in this branch of traffic, by the continual apprehension of seeing American iron imported duty free: that the iron works, already carried on in England, occasioned a consumption of one hundred and ninety-eight thousand cords of wood, produced in coppices that grow upon barren lands, which could not otherwise be turned to any good account: that, as the coppices afford shade, and preserve a moisture in the ground, the pasture is more valuable with the wood, than it would be if the coppices were grubbed up; consequently all the estates, where these now grow, would sink in their yearly value: that these coppices, now cultivated and preserved for the use of the iron works, are likewise absolutely necessary for the manufacture of leather, as they furnish bark for the tanners; and that, according to the management of these coppices, they produced a great number of timber trees so necessary for the purposes of building; that neither

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the American iron, nor any that had yet been found in Great-Britain, was so proper for converting into steel, as that which comes from Sweden, particularly that sort called, ore ground; but as there are mines in the northern parts of Britain, nearly in the same latitude with those of Sweden, furnished with sufficient quantities of wood, and rivers for mills and engines, it was hardly to be doubted, but that people would find metal of the same quality, and, in a few years, be able to prevent the necessity of importing iron either from Sweden or Russia: that American iron could never interfere with that which Great-Britain imported from Sweden, because it was not fit for edge-tools, anchors, chain-plates, and other particulars necessary in ship building; nor lessen the importation of Russian iron, which was not only harder than the American and British, but also could be afforded at a lower rate than that brought from our own plantations, even though the duty of this last should be taken off: and that, therefore, the importation of American iron, duty free, could interfere with no other sort but that produced in Britain, with which, by means of this advantage, it would clash so much, as to put a stop, in a little time, to all the iron works now
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carried on in the kingdom, and reduce to beggary a great number of families whom they support.

The friends of the bill, on the other hand, affirmed, that when a manufacture is much more valuable than the rough materials, and these cannot be produced at home in sufficient quantities, and at such a price as is consistent with the preservation of the manufacture, it is the interest of the legislature to admit a free importation of these materials; even from foreign countries, although it should put an end to the production of that material in this island: that as the neighbours of Great Britain are now more attentive than ever to their commercial interells, and endeavouring to manufacture their rough materials at home, this nation must take every method for diminishing the price of materials, otherwise in a few years it will lose the manufacture; and, instead of supplying other countries, be supplied by them with all the fine tools and utensils made of steel and iron: that, being in danger of losing not only the manufacture, but the produce of iron, unless it can be procured at a cheaper rate than that for which it is sold at present; the only way of attaining this end, is by lowering the duty payable upon the importation of foreign

reign iron, or by rendering it necessary for the undertakers of the iron mines in Great-Britain to sell their produce cheaper than it has been for some years afforded: that the most effectual method for accomplishing this purpose is to raise up a rival, by allowing a free importation of all sorts of iron from the American plantations: that American iron can never be sold so cheap as that of Britain can be afforded; for, in the colonies, labour of all kinds is much dearer than in England; if a man employs his own slaves, he must reckon in his charge a great deal more than the common interest of their purchase money, because when one of them dies or escapes from his master, he loses both interest and principle: that the common interest of money in the plantations is considerably higher than in England, consequently no man in that country will employ his money in any branch of trade, by which he cannot gain considerably more per cent. than is expected in Great Britain, where the interest is low, and profit moderate; a circumstance, which will always give a greater advantage to the British miner, who likewise enjoys an exemption from freight and insurance, which lie heavy upon the American adventurer, especially in time of war: that, with regard to
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the suggestion about the leather tanners, it was well known, that as the coppices generally grow on barren lands, not fit for tillage, and improved the pasturage, no proprietor would be at the expence of grubbing up the wood to spoil the pasture, as he could make no other use of the land on which it was produced : that wood must be always worth something, especially in countries where there is not plenty of coal, and the timber trees would produce considerable advantage : that, if there was not one iron mine in Great-Britain, no coppices would be grubbed up, unless they grew on a rich soil, which would produce corn instead of cordwood ; and that, therefore, the tanners had nothing to fear, especially as planting had become a prevailing taste among the landholders of the island.

The committee, appointed to prepare this bill, having maturely weighed the argument on both sides, at length reported their opinion, implying, that the liberty, granted by an act passed in the twenty-third year of his majesty's reign, of importing bar-iron from the British colonies in America into the port of London, should be extended to all the other ports of Great-Britain ; and that so much of that act as related to this clause, should be repealed.

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The house having approved of these resolutions, and the bill being brought in accordingly, another petition was offered by several noblemen, gentlemen, freeholders, and other proprietors, owners, and possessors of coppices and woodlands in the west-riding of Yorkshire, alledging, that a permission to import American bar-iron duty free, would be productive of numberless ill-consequences, both of a public and private nature; representing certain hardships, to which they in particular would be exposed; and praying, that if the bill should pass, they might be relieved from the pressure of an act passed in the reign of Henry the eighth, obliging the owners of coppice-woods to preserve them, under severe penalties; and be permitted to sell and grub up their coppice-woods, in order to a more proper cultivation of the soil, without being restrained by the fear of malicious and interested prosecutions.

In consequence of this application, a clause was added to the bill, repealing so much of the act of Henry the eighth as prohibited the conversion of coppice or underwoods into pasture or tillage; then it passed through both houses, and received the royal assent. As there was not time, after this affair came under consideration,

ration, to procure any new accounts from America, and as it was thought necessary to know the quantities of iron made in that country, the house, in an address to his majesty, desired he would be pleased to give directions, that there should be laid before them, in the next session of parliament, an account of the quantity of iron made in the American colonies, from Christmas 1749. to the fifth day of January 1756, each year being distinguished.

From this important object, the parliament turned its attention to a regulation of a much more private nature. In consequence of a petition, presented by the lord-mayor, aldermen, and common council of London, a bill was prepared, and passed into a law without opposition, for the more effectual preservation and improvement of the fry and spawn of fish in the river Thames, and waters of Medway, and for the better regulating the fishery in these rivers.

The two next measures, adopted by the parliament, were, first, a bill to render more effectual the several laws then in being, for the amendment and preservation of the highways and turnpike roads of the kingdom; the other, for the more effectually preventing the spreading of the contagious distemper, which, at that time, raged among

mong the horned cattle. A third took its rise from the distress of poor silk manufacturers, who could find no employment, and were deprived of all subsistence through the interruption of the Levant trade, occasioned by the war, and the delay of the merchant-ships from Italy. In order to afford them some kind of relief, a bill was prepared, ordaining, that any persons might import from any place, in any ship or vessel whatsoever, till the first day of December 1757, organzine thrown silk of the growth or produce of Italy, to be brought to the custom-house of London, wheresoever landed: but that no Italian thrown silk, coarser than that of Bologna, nor any tram of the growth of Italy; nor any other thrown silk of the growth or produce of Turkey, Persia, East-India, or China, should be imported by this act, on pain of forfeiting the commodity. Notwithstanding several petitions delivered by the merchants, owners and commanders of ships, and others trading to Leghorn, and other ports of Italy; as well as by the importers and manufacturers of raw-silk, representing the evil consequences that would probably flow from the passing of such a bill, the parliament agreed to this temporary deviation from the famous act of navigation, for a

present supply to the poor manufacturers, who were actually reduced to the greatest necessity.

The practice of smuggling having of late years increased to a surprising degree, and apprehensions being entertained, that the persons concerned in that unlawful traffic, might be tempted to enlist in the service of the enemy; in order to provide a remedy for both these evils, a law was now passed, by which it was enacted, that every person who had been, before the first of May, in the present year, guilty of illegal running, concealing, receiving, or carrying any wool, or prohibited goods, or any foreign commodities liable to duties, the same not having been paid or secured; or of aiding therein, or had been found with fire-arms or weapons, in order to be aiding to such offenders; or had been guilty of receiving such goods after seizure; or of any act whatsoever, whereby persons might be deemed runners of foreign goods; or of hindering, wounding, or beating any officer in the execution of his duty, or assisting therein, should be indemnified from all such offences, concerning which, no suit should then have been commenced, or composition made, on condition that he should, before being apprehended, or prosecuted, and before

fore the first day of December, enter himself with some commissioned officer of his majesty's fleet, to serve as as a common sailor; and should, for three years from such entry, unless sooner duly discharged, actually serve and do duty in that station, and register his name, &c. with the clerk of the peace of the country where he resided, as the act prescribes.

Loud complaints having lately been made of the irregular payment of the wages of seamen, who were thereby subjected to many inconveniencies, Mr. Grenville, brother to earl Temple, moved for leave to bring in a bill for the encouragement of seamen employed in his majesty's navy, and for establishing a regular method for the punctual, speedy, and certain payment of their wages, as well as for rescuing them from the arts of fraud and imposition.

The motion being approved, the bill was prepared, read, printed, and, after it had received some material amendments, passed into the house of lords, where it was encountered with several objections, and dropped for this session of parliament.

The other designs, which miscarried in the same manner, were these: a bill for enlarging the terms and powers granted and continued by several acts of parliament, for

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repairing the harbour of Dover in Kent, and for restoring the harbour of Rye in Sussex to its antient goodnels : a bill to continue an act, made in the sixth year of his present majesty's reign, for the better regulating of lassage and ballastage in the river Thames : a bill to restrain and limit the vending and disposing of poisons : and a bill regulating the manner of licensing alehouses in cities and towns corporate within the kingdom of England.

Such were the miseries, which the poor had suffered, during the late artificial famine, that the commons resolved to prevent, if possible, the return of this national calamity. With this view they appointed a committee to consider of proper provisions to restrain the price of corn and bread within such bounds, as to them should seem reasonable. The committee was impowered to send for persons, papers, and records ; and it was determined, that all who attended the committee should have voices. Having inquired into the causes of the late scarcity, they agreed to several resolutions, and a bill was prepared to explain and amend the laws against regrators, foretallers, and engrossers of corn.

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The committee also received instructions to inquire into the abuses of millers, mealmen, and bakers, with regard to bread, and to consider of proper methods to prevent them in the sequel; but no farther progress was made in this important affair, which was the more interesting, as the lives of individuals, in a great measure, depended upon a speedy reformation: for the millers and bakers were said to have adulterated their flour with common whiting, lime, bone-ashes, allum, and other ingredients pernicious to the human constitution; a consummation of villainy for which no adequate punishment could be invented.

Among the measures attempted in parliament which did not succeed, one of the most remarkable was a bill introduced by Mr. Rose Fuller, Mr. Charles Townshend, and Mr. Banks, to explain, amend, and render more effectual a law passed in the reign of king William the third, intituled, "An act to punish governors of plantations, in this kingdom, for crimes committed by them in the plantations." This bill was proposed in consequence of some complaints specifying acts of cruelty, folly, and oppression, of which some British governors were said to have been guilty; but

before the bill could be brought in, the parliament was prorogued.

But no step taken by the house of commons, in the course of this session, was more interesting to the body of the people, than the inquiry into the loss of Minorca, which had excited such loud and universal clamour. By addresses to the king, unanimously voted, the commons desired that his majesty would order to be laid before them copies of all the letters and papers, containing any intelligence received by the secretaries of state, the commissioners of the admiralty, or any others of his majesty's ministers, in relation to the equipment of the French fleet at Toulon, or the designs of the French on Minorca, or any other of his majesty's possessions in Europe, since the first day of January 1755, to the first day of last August. They likewise begged leave to peruse a list of the ships of war that were equipped and made ready for sea, from the first of August 1755, to the thirtieth day of April in the following year; with the copies of all sailing orders sent to the commanders during that period; as also the state and condition of his majesty's ships in the several ports of Great-Britain, at the time of admiral Byng's departure, with the squadron under his command, for the relief

of Fort St. Philip, during the period of time above-mentioned, according to the monthly returns made to the admiralty, with the number of seamen mustered and borne on board the respective ships. They demanded copies of all orders and instructions given to that admiral, and of letters written to and received from him, during his continuance in that command, either by the secretaries of state, or lords of the admiralty, relating to the condition of his squadron, and to the execution of his orders. In a word, they required the inspection of all papers which could, in any manner, tend to explain the loss of Minorca, and the miscarriage of Mr. Byng's squadron. His majesty complied with every article of their request: the papers were delivered to the house, ordered to lie upon the table for the perusal of the members, and finally referred to the consideration of a committee of the whole house.

In the course of their deliberations they addressed his majesty for more information, till at length the truth seemed to be buried under such an enormous load of papers, as the efforts of a whole session would not have been able to remove. Indeed many discerning persons, without doors, began to despair of seeing the mystery unfolded. as
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soon as the inquiry was undertaken by a committee of the whole house. They thought, that an affair of such a dark, intricate, and suspicious nature, ought to have been referred to a select and secret committee, chosen by ballot, impowered to send for persons, papers, and records; and to examine witnesses in the most solemn and deliberate manner: that the names of the committee, ought to have been published for the satisfaction of the people, who could have judged, with some certainty, whether the inquiry would be carried on with such impartiality as the national interest required. In this, however, they were unhappily disappointed; nor had they better reason to be satisfied with the resolutions of the committee, upon finishing the inquiry. The first and last of these resolutions deserve particular notice.

By the former it appeared to the committee, that his majesty, from the twenty-seventh day of August, in the year 1755, to the twentieth day of April in the succeeding year, received such repeated and concurrent intelligence, as gave just reason to believe that the French king intended to invade his dominions of Great-Britain or Ireland.

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In the latter they declared their opinion, that no greater number of ships of war could be sent into the Mediterranean, than were actually sent thither under the command of admiral Byng; nor any greater reinforcement than the regiment which was sent, and the detachment, equal to a battalion, which was ordered to the relief of Fort St. Philip; consistently with the state of the navy, and the various services essential to the safety of his majesty's dominions, and the interests of his subjects.

The people, in general, were far from subscribing to these sentiments of the committee. They alledged, that intelligence of the armament at Toulon was conveyed to the admiralty as early as the month of September, in the year 1755, with express notice that it would consist of twelve ships of the line; that the design against Minorca was communicated as early as the twenty-seventh day of August, by consul Banks of Carthagená; confirmed by letters from consul Beritres at Genoa, dated on the seventeenth and twenty-sixth of January, and received by Mr. Fox, secretary of state, on the fourth and eleventh of February; as well as by many subsequent intimations: that, notwithstanding

ing these repeated advices, even after hostilities had commenced in Europe, when the garrison of Minorca amounted to no more than four incomplete regiments, and one company of artillery, forty-two officers being absent, and the place otherwise unprovided for a siege; when the Mediterranean Squadron, commanded by Mr. Edgecumbe, consisted of two ships of the line, and five frigates; neither stores, ammunition, or provision, the absent officers belonging to the garrison, recruits for the regiments, though ready raised, miners, nor any additional troops, were sent to the island; nor the Squadron augmented, till admiral Byng sailed from Spithead on the sixth day of April, with no more ships of the line than, by the most early and authentic intelligence, the government were informed would sail from Toulon, even when Mr. Byng should have been joined by commodore Edgecumbe; a junction upon which no dependance ought to have been laid: that this Squadron contained no troops but such as belonged to the four regiments in garrison, except one battalion to serve in the fleet as marines, unless we include the order for another to be embarked at Gibraltar, which order was neither obeyed nor understood: that considering the danger, to which

which Minorca was exposed, and the forwardness of the enemy's preparations at Toulon, admiral Osborne, with thirteen ships of the line and one frigate, who returned on the sixteenth of February, after having convoyed a fleet of merchant-ships, might have been detached to Minorca, without endangering the coast of Great-Britain; for at that time, exclusive of this squadron, there were eight ships of the line and thirty two frigates ready manned, and thirty two ships of the line and five frigates almost equipped: that admiral Hawke was sent with fourteen ships of the line and one frigate to cruize in the bay of Biscay, after repeated intelligence had been received, that the French fleet had sailed for the West-Indies, and the eleven ships remaining at Brest and Rochfort were in want of hands and cannon, so that they could never serve to cover any embarkation, or descent: consequently Mr. Hawke's squadron might have been spared for the relief of Minorca: that, instead of attending to this important object, the admiralty, on the eighteenth day of March, sent two ships of the line and three frigates to intercept a coasting convoy off Cape Barfleur; on the eleventh of the same month they detached two ships of the line to the West-Indies: and on the
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nineteenth two more to North America, where they could be of little immediate service; on the twenty-third two of the line and three frigates, a convoy-hunting off Cherburg; and on the first of April five ships of the line, including three returned from this last service, to reinforce Sir Edward Hawke, already too strong for the French fleet bound to Canada; and that all these ships might have been added to Mr. Byng's squadron, without exposing Great-Britain or Ireland to any hazard of invasion: that at length Mr. Byng was detached with ten great ships only, and even denied a frigate to repeat signals, for which he petitioned; although, at that very time, there were in port, exclusive of his squadron, seventeen ships of the line and nineteen frigates almost equipped: that, from these and other circumstances, it evidently appeared, that a greater number of ships might have been detached to the Mediterranean than were actually sent with admiral Byng: and that the not sending an earlier and stronger force was one great cause of the loss of Minorca.

The next affair that came before the commons, related to the contracts for victualling the forces in America, which were supposed by some malecontents to be frau-

fraudulent and unconscionable. This suspicion was occasioned by an ambiguous expression of the contractors, who, when examined before the committee, seemed anxious to clear themselves at the expence of the ministry.

The house therefore resolved, that the contract entered into on the twenty-sixth day of March, in the year 1756, by the commissioners of the treasury, with William Baker, Christopher Kilby, and Richard Baker, of London, merchants, for furnishing provisions to the forces under the command of the earl of Loudon, was prudent and necessary, and properly adapted to the securing a constant and effectual supply for those forces in America.

In the foregoing session an address had been presented to the king by the house of commons, desiring his majesty would give orders for laying before them several papers relating to disputes which had lately happened between his excellency Charles Knowles, Esq; and some of the principal inhabitants of the island of Jamaica. This governor was accused of some illegal, cruel, and arbitrary acts, during the course of his administration: but these imputations he incurred by an exertion of power, which was in itself laudable, and well intended for the com-

mercial interest of the island. This was his changing the seat of government, and procuring an act of assembly for removing the several laws, records, books, papers, and writings, belonging to several offices in that island, from Spanish-town to Kingston; and for obliging the several officers to keep their offices, and hold a supreme court of judicature, at this last place, to which he had transferred the seat of government.

Spanish-town, otherwise called St. Jago de la Vega, the old capital, was an inconsiderable inland place of no security, trade, or importance; whereas Kingston was the center of commerce, situated on the side of a fine harbour filled with ships, well defended from the insults of an enemy, large, wealthy, and flourishing. The merchants, who dwell here, and ship at this port the greatest part of the sugars that grow upon the island, found it extremely inconvenient and expensive to take out their clearances at Spanish town, which stands at a considerable distance; and the same inconvenience and expence being felt by the rest of the inhabitants, who had occasion to prosecute suits at law, or attend the assembly of the island, they joined in an address to the governor, desiring, that, in consideration of these inconveniencies, added to that

that of the weakness of Spanish town and the importance of Kingston, the seat of government might be removed to the last mentioned place. The governor, convinced of the equity of their request, thought proper to comply with the petition, and in so doing exposed himself to the hatred and resentment of certain powerful planters, who possessed estates in and near the old town of St. Jago de la Vega, thus deserted. This seems to have been the real source of the animosity and clamour that were raised against Mr. Knowles, whose conduct was complained of in a petition, signed by nineteen members of the assembly, transmitted to England, and presented to his majesty.

In the two sessions preceding this year, the affair had been referred to the house of commons, where the governor's character was painted in the most odious colours, and several papers relating to the dispute were examined. Mr. Knowles having by this time returned to England, the subject of his administration was revived, and submitted to a committee of the whole house.

In the mean time petitions were presented by several merchants of London and Liverpool, concerned in the trade to Jamaica, alleging, that the removal of the public courts, offices, and records of the island of

Jamaica to Kingston, and establishing the seat of government there, had been attended with many important advantages, by rendering the strength of the island more formidable, the property of the traders and inhabitants more secure, and the prosecution of all commercial business more expeditious and less expensive than formerly; and therefore praying, that the purposes of the act, passed in Jamaica for that end, might be carried into effectual execution, in such manner as to the house should seem most proper.

The committee, having examined a great number of papers, agreed to some resolutions, importing, that a certain resolution of the assembly of Jamaica, dated on the twenty-ninth day of October, 1753, asserting a claim of right in that assembly to raise and apply public money without the consent of the governor and council was illegal, repugnant to the terms of his majesty's commission to his governor of the said island, and derogatory of the rights of the crown and people of Great Britain: that the six last resolutions taken in the assembly of Jamaica, on the twenty-ninth day of October, 1753, proceeded on a manifest misapprehension of the king's instructions to his governor, forbidding him to give his assent

to any bill of an unusual or extraordinary nature and importance, wherein his majesty's prerogative, or the property of his subjects, might be prejudiced, or the trade or shipping of the kingdom any ways affected, unless there should be a clause inserted, suspending the execution of such bill until his majesty's pleasure should be known: and that such instruction was just and necessary, and no alteration of the constitution of the island, nor any way derogatory to the rights of the subjects in Jamaica. From these resolutions the reader may be enabled to form a notion of the dispute, which had arisen between the people of Jamaica and their governor, vice-admiral Knowles, whose conduct on this occasion seems to have been approved by the legislature. The parliament, however, forbore to determine the question, whether the removal of the courts of judicature from Spanish town to Kingston was a measure, that would tend to the interest of the island in general.

The last subject which we shall mention, as having come under the consideration of the commons during this session of parliament, was the state of Milford haven on the coast of Wales, one of the most capacious, safe, and commodious harbours in

Great-Britain. Here the country abounds with conveniencies for building ships of war, and erecting forts, quays, and magazines. It might be fortified at a very small expence, so as to be quite secure from any attempts of the enemy, and rendered by far the most useful harbour in the kingdom for fleets, cruisers, trading ships, and packet-boats, bound to and from the westward, for from hence they may put to sea almost with any wind, and even at low water: they may weather Scilly and Cape Clear when no vessel can stir from the British channel, or out of the French ports of Brest and Rochfort; and as a post can travel from hence in three days to London, it might become the center of very useful sea intelligence. A petition from several merchants in London, was delivered and recommended to the house in a message from the king, representing the advantages of this harbour, and the small expence at which it might be fortified; and praying that the house would take this important subject into consideration. Accordingly a committee was appointed for this purpose, with power to send for persons, papers, and records; and every circumstance relating to it was examined with the utmost accuracy and diligence. At length, the report being made to the house
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by Mr. Charles Townshend, they unanimously concurred in an address to his majesty, implying, that many great losses had been sustained by the trade of the kingdom, in the time of war, from the want of a safe harbour on the western coast of the island, for the reception and protection of merchant ships, and sending out cruisers: that the harbour of Milford haven, in the county of Pembroke, is most advantageously situated, and, if properly fortified and secured, in every respect adapted to the answering those important purposes: that they therefore, hoped his majesty would give immediate directions for erecting batteries, with proper cover, on the sides of the said harbour, in the most convenient places for guarding the entrance, called Hubberstone-road; and also such other fortifications as might be necessary to secure the interior parts of the harbour: that, until such batteries and fortifications could be completed, some temporary defence might be provided for the immediate protection of the ships and vessels lying in the said harbour: and finally, that the house would make good to his majesty all such expences as should be incurred for these purposes.

The address met with a gracious reception, and a promise that such directions should

should be given. The harbour was actually surveyed, the places were marked out for batteries, and the estimates prepared; but we do not find that any farther progress hath been made in the prosecution of this patriotic and laudable design, which, in all probability, will be neglected until it shall be revived by some future disaster.

On the fourth day of July the session was closed with a speech from his majesty, who assured the parliament, that the succour and preservation of his dominions in America had been his constant care, and, next to the security of his kingdoms, should continue to be his great and principal object: that he had taken such measures, as, he trusted, by the blessing of God, would effectually disappoint the designs of the enemy in those parts: that he had no farther view but to vindicate the just rights of his crown and subjects from the most injurious encroachments; to preserve tranquillity, as far as the circumstances of things might admit; and to prevent the true friends of Britain, and the liberties of Europe, from being oppressed and endangered by any unprovoked and unnatural conjunction.

Of all the transactions that distinguished this year, the most remarkable was the sentence executed on admiral Byng, the son
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of that great officer who had acquired such honour by his naval achievements in the preceding reign, and was ennobled for his services by the title of lord viscount Torrington. His second son, John Byng, had, from his earliest youth, been trained up to his father's profession; and was generally reputed one of the best officers in the navy, when he embarked in that expedition to Minorca which covered his character with disgrace, and even exposed him to all the horrors of an ignominious death. On the twenty eighth day of December his trial began before a court martial, held on board of the ship St. George in the harbour of Portsmouth, to which place Mr. Byng had been conveyed from Greenwich by a party of horse-guards, and insulted by the populace in every town and village through which he passed. The court having, after a long and tedious sitting, examined the evidences for the crown and the prisoner, agreed unanimously to thirty-seven resolutions, signifying their opinion, that admiral Byng, during the engagement between the British and French fleets on the twentieth day of May last, did not do his utmost endeavour to take, seize, and destroy the ships of the French king, which it was his duty to have engaged; and to assist such of his

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majesty's ships as were engaged, which it was his duty to have assisted; and that he did not exert his utmost power for the relief of St. Philip's castle. They therefore unanimously agreed, that he fell under part of the twelfth article of an act of parliament, passed in the twenty-second year of the present reign, for amending, explaining, and reducing into one act of parliament the laws relating to the government of his majesty's ships, vessels, and forces by sea; and as that article positively prescribed death, without any alternative left to the discretion of the court, under any variation of circumstances, they unanimously adjudged the said admiral John Byng to be shot to death, at such time and on board of such ship as the lords commissioners of the admiralty should please to direct. But as it appeared, by the evidence of the officers who were near the admiral's person, that no backwardness was observed in him during the action, nor any mark of fear or confusion either in his countenance or behaviour; but that he delivered his orders coolly and distinctly, without seeming deficient in personal courage; and as they had reason to believe from other circumstances, that his misconduct did not arise either from cowardice or disaffection, they unanimously and earnestly recom-

recommended him as a proper object of mercy. The admiral himself behaved, thro' the whole trial, with the most chearful composure, seemingly the effect of conscious innocence, upon which perhaps he too much relied. Even after he had heard the evidence examined against him, and had finished his own defence, he told his account with being honourably acquitted, and ordered his coach to be ready for carrying him directly from the tribunal to London. A gentleman, his friend, by whom he was attended, having been previously informed of the sentence to be pronounced, thought it his duty to prepare him for so solemn an occasion, that he might thereby be enabled to summon all his fortitude; and accordingly made him acquainted with the intelligence he had received. The admiral gave tokens of surprize and resentment; but betrayed no signs of fear or disorder, either then or in the court when the sentence was pronounced. On the contrary, while several members of the court-martial discovered marks of the deepest sorrow, shedding tears, and sighing with extraordinary emotion, he heard his doom denounced without undergoing the least alteration of countenance, and made a low bow to the president and

and the other members of the court as he retired.

The officers that composed this tribunal, were so sensible of the rigour of the law that they unanimously subscribed a letter to the board of admiralty, containing this remarkable paragraph. "We cannot help laying the distresses of our minds before your lordships on this occasion, in finding ourselves under a necessity of condemning a man to death, from the great severity of the twelfth article of war, part of which he falls under, which admits of no mitigation, if the crime should be committed by an error in judgment; and therefore, for our own consciences sake, as well as in justice to the prisoner, we pray your lordships, in the most earnest manner, to recommend him to his majesty's clemency." The lords of the Admiralty complied so far with the request of the court-martial, as to transmit their letter to the king, together with copies of their proceedings, and a letter from themselves intimating a doubt with regard to the legality of the sentence, as the crime of negligence, for which the admiral had been condemned, was not expressed in any part of the proceedings. At the same time copies of two petitions from George lord viscount

viscount Torrington, in behalf of his kinsman admiral Byng, were submitted to his majesty's royal wisdom and consideration. All the friends and relations of the unhappy convict exerted their utmost endeavours in order to procure him a pardon; and as the circumstances had appeared so strong in his favour, it was supposed, that they would succeed in their attempt; but infamous arts were used to inflame the populace against the devoted admiral. Mobs were once more hired to hang and burn him in effigie in different parts of the capital; and those, whose unaccountable negligence had been the original cause of the national misfortunes, and were eager to screen themselves by sacrificing the unhappy admiral, are said to have obstructed the exertion of the royal clemency. His majesty, in consequence of the representation made by the lords of the admiralty, referred the sentence to the consideration of the twelve judges, who were unanimously of opinion that the sentence was legal. This report being transmitted from the privy-council to the Admiralty, their lordships issued a warrant for executing the sentence of death on the twenty-eighth day of February. One gentleman at the board, however, refused to subscribe the warrant, assigning, for his refusal, the

reasons which we have inserted by way of note, for the satisfaction of the reader*.

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* A----I F----s's reasons for not signing the warrant for admiral Byng's execution.

"It may be thought great presumption in me to differ from so great an authority as that of the twelve judges; but when a man is called upon to sign his name to an act, which is to give authority to the shedding of blood, he ought to be guided by his own conscience, and not by the opinions of other men.

In the case before us, it is not the merit of admiral Byng that I consider: whether he deserves death, or not, is not a question for me to decide; but whether or not his life can be taken away by the sentence pronounced on him by the court-martial; and after having so clearly explained their motives for pronouncing such a sentence, is the point which alone has employed my most serious consideration.

The twelfth article of war, on which admiral Byng's sentence is grounded, says, (according to my understanding of its meaning) "that every person who, in time of action, shall withdraw, keep back, or not come into fight, or who shall not do his utmost, &c. through motives of cowardice, negligence, or disaffection, shall suffer death." The court-martial does, in express words, acquit admiral Byng of cowardice, and disaffection, and does not name the word negligence. Admiral Byng does not, as I conceive, fall under the letter or description of the twelfth article of war. It may be said, that negligence is implied, though the word is not mentioned; otherwise the court-martial would not have brought his

of-

Though the king was prevailed on to
lend a deaf ear to all applications in favour

P 2

of
offence under the twelfth article, having acquitted him
of cowardice and disaffection. But it must be acknow-
ledged, that the negligence implied cannot be wilful
negligence: for wilful negligence, in admiral Byng's
situation, must have proceeded from either cowardice
or disaffection, and he is expressly acquitted of both
these crimes: besides, these crimes, which are implied
only, and not named, may indeed justify suspicion,
and private opinion; but cannot satisfy the conscience
in a case of blood.

Admiral Byng's fate was referred to a court-mar-
tial; his life and death were left to their opinions.
The court-martial condemned him to death, because,
as they expressly say, they were under a necessity of
doing so by reason of the letter of the law, the severity
of which they complained of, because it admits of no
mitigation. The court-martial expressly say, that, for
the sake of their consciences, as well as in justice to
the prisoner, they most earnestly recommend him to
his majesty for mercy; it is evident then, that in
the opinions and consciences of the judges, he was not
deserving of death.

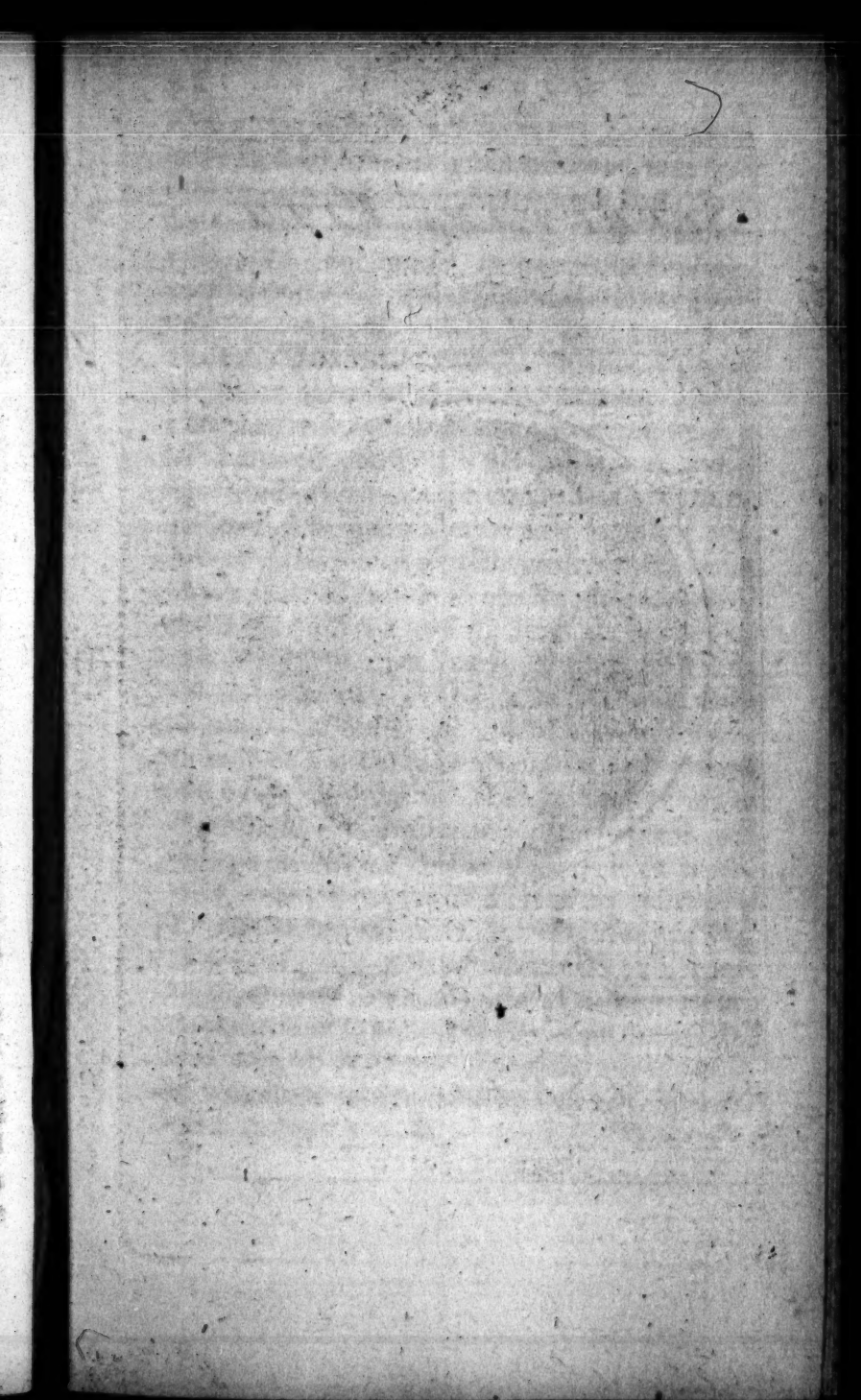
The question then is, shall the opinions, or necessi-
ties, of the court-martial determine admiral Byng's
fate? if it should be the latter, he will be executed
contrary to the intentions and meanings of his judges;
if the former, his life is not forfeited. His judges de-
clare him not deserving of death; but, mistaking
either the meaning of the law, or the nature of his
offence, they bring him under an article of war, which,
according to their own description of his offence, he
does

of the admiral, yet was he determined to do nothing that should be thought inconsistent with law. A member of parliament, who had sat upon the court-martial at Portsmouth, rose up in his place, and made application to the house of commons, in behalf of himself, and several other members of that tribunal, requesting the aid of the legislature to be freed from the oath of secrecy imposed on courts-martial, that they might disclose the grounds on which sentence

does not, I conceive, fall under; and then they condemn him to death, because, as they say, the law admits of no mitigation. Can a man's life be taken away by such a sentence? I would not willingly be misunderstood, and have it believed that I judge of admiral Byng's deserts; that was the business of a court-martial, and it is my duty only to act according to my conscience; which, after deliberate consideration, assisted by the best light a poor understanding can afford, remains still in doubt, and therefore I cannot consent to sign a warrant whereby the sentence of the court-martial may be carried into execution; for I cannot help thinking, that however criminal admiral Byng may be, his life is not forfeited by that sentence. I don't mean to find fault with other men's opinions; all I endeavour at, is to give reasons for my own; and all I desire, or wish, is, that I may not be misunderstood; I do not pretend to judge admiral Byng's deserts, nor to give any opinion on the propriety of the act.

Signed 16 Feb. 1757, at the Admiralty,

J. F.



SECRETARY PITT.



Engrav'd for Ridders History of England

tence of death had passed on admiral Byng; and, perhaps, discover such circumstances as might shew the sentence to be improper: Although this application produced no resolution in the house, the king, on the twenty-sixth day of February, sent a message to the commons by Mr. secretary Pitt, importing, that though he had resolved to let the law take its course, with relation to admiral Byng, and resisted all solicitations to the contrary, yet as a member of the house had expressed some scruples about the sentence, his majesty had thought fit to respite the execution of it, that there might be an opportunity of knowing, by the separate examination of the members of the court-martial, upon oath, what grounds there were for such scruples; and that his majesty was still determined to let the sentence be executed, unless it should appear from the said examination, that admiral Byng was unjustly condemned.

The message being read, a bill was immediately brought in to release the members of the court-martial from the obligation of secrecy, and passed through the lower house without opposition; but in the house of lords it appeared to be destitute of a proper foundation. They sent a message to the commons, desiring them to give

leave, that such of the members of the court-martial, as were members of that house, might attend their lordships, in order to be examined, on the second reading of the bill: accordingly, they and the rest of the court-martial attended, and answered all questions without hesitation.

As they did not insist upon any excuse, nor produce any satisfactory reason for shewing that the man they had condemned was a proper object of mercy, their lordships were of opinion, that there was no occasion for passing any such bill, which, therefore, they rejected. It is not easy to conceive what stronger reasons could be given for proving Mr. Byng an object of mercy than those mentioned in the letter sent to the board of Admiralty, by the members of the court-martial, who were impowered to try the imputed offence, and consequently must have been deemed well qualified to judge of his conduct.

The unfortunate admiral being thus abandoned to his fate, prepared himself for death with resignation and tranquillity. He maintained a surprising cheerfulness to the last; nor did he, from his condemnation to his execution, betray the least sign of impatience or apprehension. During that interval he had continued on board of the *Monsieur*,
narque,

marque, a third rate ship of war, anchored in the harbour of Portsmouth, under a strong guard, in custody of the marshal of the Admiralty.

On the fourteenth of March, the day fixed for his execution, the boats belonging to the squadron at Spithead being manned and armed, containing their captains and officers, with a detachment of marines, attended this solemnity in the harbour, which was also crowded with an infinite number of other boats and vessels filled with spectators.

About noon, the admiral having taken leave of a clergyman, and two friends who accompanied him, walked out of the great cabin to the quarter-deck, where two files of marines were ready to execute the sentence. He advanced with a firm and steady pace, a composed and resolute countenance, and resolved to suffer with his face uncovered, until his friends representing, that his looks might possibly intimidate the soldiers, and prevent their taking aim properly, he complied with their request, threw his hat on the deck, kneeled on a cushion, tied one white handkerchief over his eyes, and dropped the other as a signal for his executioners, who fired a volley so decisive, that five balls passed through his body, and he dropped down dead in an instant. The time

in which this tragedy was acted, from his walking out of the cabin to his being deposited in the coffin, did not exceed three minutes.

Such was the miserable and untimely fate of admiral John Byng, who, whatever his failings and indiscretions might have been, seems to have been rashly condemned, meanly given up, and cruelly sacrificed to vile considerations. His consciousness of his own innocence he declared on the verge of eternity, when there was no longer any cause of dissimulation, in the following paper, which, immediately before his death, he delivered to the marshal of the admiralty. "A few moments will now deliver me from the virulent persecution, and frustrate the further malice of my enemies. Nor need I envy them a life subject to the sensations my injuries, and the injustice done me, must create; persuaded I am that justice will be done to my reputation hereafter; the manner and cause of raising and keeping up the popular clamour and prejudice against me, will be seen through. I shall be considered (as I now perceive myself) a victim destined to divert the indignation and resentment of an injured and deluded people from the proper objects. My enemies, them-

themselves must now think me innocent. Happy for me, at this my last moment, that I know my own innocence, and am conscious that no part of my country's misfortunes can be owing to me. I heartily wish the shedding my blood may contribute to the happiness of my country; but cannot resign my just claim to a faithful discharge of my duty according to the best of my judgment, and the utmost exertion of my ability for his majesty's honour, and my country's service. I am sorry that my endeavours were not attended with more success; and that the armament under my command, proved too weak to succeed in an expedition of such moment. Truth has prevailed over calumny and falsehood, and justice has wiped off the ignominious stain of my supposed want of personal courage, and the charge of disaffection. My heart acquits me of these crimes: but who can be presumptuously sure of his own judgment? If my crime is an error of judgment, or differing in opinion from my judges, and if yet the error in judgment should be on their side, God forgive them, as I do; and may the distress of their minds, and uneasiness of their consciences, which in justice to me they have represented, be relieved and subside as my resentment has done.

My enemies My enemies My enemies

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done. The Supreme Judge sees all hearts and motives, and to him I must submit the justice of my cause."

Though the parliament unanimously concurred in enabling the government to prosecute the war with the utmost vigour, the liberal supplies, they granted, had like to have proved ineffectual, through a want of harmony in her councils. In the course of the last year the spirit of discontent had been considerably encreased by a series of disappointments and miscarriages, which were imputed to want of intelligence, sagacity, and vigour in the administration. The defeat of Braddock, the reduction of Oswego and other forts in America; the delay of armaments, the neglect of opportunities, ineffectual cruises, absurd dispositions of fleets and squadrons, the disgrace in the Mediterranean, and the loss of Minorca, were numbered among the misfortunes that flowed from the crude designs of a weak and irresolute ministry; and the prospect of their pursuing no better measures for the future, exposed them still farther to the contempt and indignation of the people. In order to conciliate the good-will of those whom their conduct had disoblged, to acquire a fresh stock of credit with their fellow subjects, and remove
from

from their own shoulders part of what future censure might ensue, they admitted into a share of the administration a certain set of gentlemen, remarkable for their talents and popularity, headed by Mr. Pitt and Mr. Legge, the two most illustrious patriots of Great-Britain, alike distinguished and admired for their unconquerable spirit and untainted integrity. The former of these was appointed secretary of state, the other chancellor of the exchequer; and their friends were gratified with other honourable though subordinate offices.

So far the people were pleased with the promotion of individuals, upon whose virtues and abilities they had the most perfect reliance: but these new ingredients would never thoroughly mix with the old leaven. The patriot ministers could neither be persuaded, cajoled, nor intimidated into measures, which they thought repugnant to the true interest of their country. They combated in council every such plan, however patronized: they openly opposed in parliament every design, which they deemed inconsistent with the honour of the crown, or prejudicial to the rights of the people. Far from bargaining for their places, and surrendering their principles by capitulation, they maintained in office their independency

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pendency and candour with the most vigilant circumspection, and seemed determined to shew, that he is the best minister to the sovereign, who acts with the greatest probity towards the subject. Those who immediately surrounded the throne, were supposed to have concealed the true characters of these faithful servants from the knowledge of their royal master; to have represented them as obstinate, imperious, ignorant, and even lukewarm in their loyalty; and declared, that with such colleagues it would be absolutely impossible to conduct the machine of government. These suggestions, frequently repeated, produced the desired effect. On the ninth day of April Mr. Pitt, by his majesty's command, resigned the seals of secretary of state for the southern department. In the room of Mr. Legge, the king was pleased to grant the office of chancellor of the exchequer to the right honourable lord Mansfield, chief justice of the court of king's-bench, the same personage whom we have formerly mentioned under the name of Mr. Murray, solicitor-general, now promoted and ennobled for his extraordinary merit and important services.

The fate of Mr. Pitt was extended to some of his principal friends: the board of
admi-

admiralty was changed, and some other removals were made with the same intention.

What was intended as a disgrace to Mr. Pitt and Mr. Legge, turned out one of the most shining circumstances of their character. The whole nation seemed to rise up, as one man, in the vindication of their honour: every mouth was opened in their praise; and a great number of respectable cities and corporations presented them with the freedom of their respective societies, inclosed in golden boxes of curious workmanship, as testimonies of their peculiar veneration. Nothing could be a stronger proof of that reverence, which ever waits on superior virtue, than the manner in which the nation displayed its respect and affection for those two fellow-citizens, whose names will always be dear to Britain, while her sons are warmed with the love of liberty and independence.

In proportion, as the discarded patriots were esteemed, their enemies in the ministry were abhorred and detested. The people conceived the most violent antipathy against those sycophants, who, by their artful and insidious representations, had banished from the councils of their sovereign, and the service of their country, gentlemen, who were

so well qualified to direct the one, and promote the other. They thought, that the same persons, who had sunk the nation in the present distressful circumstances, who had covered her with disgrace, and reduced her to the verge of destruction, were by no means the fit instruments of her delivery and redemption. The whole kingdom caught fire at the late changes; nor could the power, the cunning, and the artifice of a faction long support itself against the united voice of Great-Britain, which soon pierced the ears of the sovereign. It was not possible to persuade the public, that salutary measures could be suggested or pursued, except by the few, whose zeal for the honour of their country, and steady adherence to an upright disinterested conduct, had secured their confidence and claimed their veneration. A great number of addresses, dutifully and loyally expressed, solicited the king, ever ready to meet half-way the wishes of his faithful people, to restore Mr. Pitt and Mr. Legge to their former employments. Upon this they rested the security and honour of the nation, as well as the hopes of a speedy and successful issue to a war, hitherto attended with disgraces and misfortunes. Accordingly his majesty was graciously pleased to restore the seals to
Mr.

Mr. Pitt, appointing him secretary of state for the southern department, on the twenty-ninth day of June; and five days after Mr. Legge was re-instated in the office of chancellor of the exchequer; promotions that afforded universal satisfaction.

It would not, perhaps, be possible to exclude from a share in the administration all who were not perfectly agreeable to the people: however unpopular the late ministry, they possessed sufficient influence in the privy-council, and credit in the house of commons, to thwart every measure, in which they did not themselves partake. This consideration, and very recent experience, probably suggested the expedient of a coalition, salutary in itself and prudent, because it was the only means of allaying the rage of faction, and healing those divisions, more pernicious to the public than the most mistaken and blundering councils. Sir Robert Henley was made lord-keeper of the great seal, and sworn of his majesty's privy-council, on the thirtieth day of June; the custody of the privy seal was committed to the earl Temple; his grace the duke of Newcastle, Mr. Legge, Mr. Nugent, the lord viscount Duncannon, and Mr. Grenville, were appointed commissioners for executing the office of treasurer of his majesty's

Exchequer; lord Anson, the admirals Boscawen and Forbes, Dr. Hay, Mr. West, Mr. Hunter, and Mr. Elliot, to preside at the board of admiralty; Mr. Fox was gratified with the office of receiver and paymaster-general of all his majesty's guards, garrisons, and land forces; and the earl of Thomond was made treasurer of the king's household, and sworn of his majesty's privy council. Other promotions likewise took place, with a design to gratify the adherents of either party; and so equally was the royal favour distributed, that the utmost harmony continued long to subsist: ingredients seemingly heterogeneous, were consolidated into one uniform mass, so as to produce effects far exceeding the most sanguine expectations; and this prudent arrangement proved displeasing only to those whom violent attachment to party had inspired with a narrow and exclusive spirit.

The numerous losses and disappointments of the preceding year, made it absolutely necessary to retrieve the credit of the British arms and councils by some vigorous and spirited enterprize, which should at the same time produce some favourable change in the circumstances of his Prussian majesty, already depressed by the repulse at Colin, and afford some relief to the army of obser-

servation, now hard pressed by the French forces in Hanover. A well planned and vigorous descent on the coast of France, it was thought, would effectually answer both these purposes, and, at the same time, give a decisive blow to the marine of that kingdom. His royal highness the duke of Cumberland, in particular, represented the necessity of some such attempt, as the only means of saving him from the disgrace of agreeing to the convention now in agitation.

The ministry foresaw, that, by destroying the enemy's shipping, all succours would be cut off from America, whither they were daily transporting troops; the British commerce secured, without those convoys so inconvenient to the board of admiralty, and to the merchants; and those ideal fears of an invasion, that had in some measure affected the public credit, dispelled. From these considerations a powerful fleet was ordered to be prepared for putting to sea on the shortest notice, and ten regiments of foot were marched to the Isle of Wight.

The naval armament, consisting of eighteen ships of the line, besides frigates, fire-ships, bomb-ketches, and transports, was intrusted to the command of Sir Edward Hawke, an officer whose faithful services recommended him, above all others, to

this honour. Sir John Mordaunt was preferred to the command of the land forces; and both strictly enjoined to act with the utmost unanimity and concord.

Europe beheld with astonishment these mighty preparations. The destination of the armament was wrapped up in the most profound secrecy: it exercised the penetration of politicians, and filled France with very serious alarms. Various were the impediments, which prevented the embarkation of the troops for several weeks, while Mr. Pitt expressed the greatest uneasiness at the delay, and repeatedly urged the commander in chief to hasten his departure; but a sufficient number of transports, owing to some blunder in the contractors, had not yet arrived. The troops discovered the utmost impatience to signalize themselves against the enemies of their country; but the superstitious drew unfavourable presages from the dilatoriness of the embarkation.

At last the transports arrived, the troops were put on board with all possible dispatch, and the fleet got under sail on the eighth day of September, attended with the prayers of every man warmed with the love, and anxious for the honour of his country. The public, big with expectation, dubious where the stroke would fall, but confident of its
suc-

success, were impatient for tidings from the fleet; but it was not till the fourteenth that even the troops on board began to imagine, that a descent was intended on the coast of France near Rochefort, or Rochelle.

On the evening of the fifteenth orders were issued that confirmed their conjecture, and filled them with the utmost joy and alacrity. Regulations were made with respect to the manner of landing; and the corps, directed to attack, had injunctions to march up vigorously to the enemy, reserving their fire till they came very near, and then running in upon them with their bayonets: orders which had all the air of a resolution to do business.

The seventeenth farther orders, respecting the debarkation, were issued; but on the nineteenth the whole fleet was surprised with a signal to lay to, though the wind was fair, the night clear, and the headland distant about twenty leagues; in which situation eight hours, a space of time invaluable in such a conjuncture, were lost, before the signal was made to proceed on their course.

On the twentieth the fleet made the isle of Oleron, and then Sir Edward Hawke sent an order to vice-admiral Knowles, requiring

quiring him, if the wind permitted, to enter Basque road, to stand in as near to the Isle of Aix as the pilot would carry him, with such ships of his division as he thought necessary for the service, and to batter the fort till the garrison should either abandon or surrender it.

But the immediate execution of this order was frustrated by a French man of war's standing in to the very middle of the fleet, and continuing in that station for some time before she discovered her mistake. This, however, she had no sooner done, than she began to make the best of her way, and admiral Knowles ordered the *Magnanime* and *Torbay* to give her chase; a circumstance that retarded the attack upon which he was immediately sent. Mean while, the remainder of the fleet was beating to the windward off the Isle of Oleron; and the commander in chief publishing orders and regulations which do credit to his judgment, and would have been highly useful had there ever been occasion to put them in practice.

On

"Whereas his majesty has, by his royal sign manual, authorised me to publish such rules and orders as are proper to be observed by all officers and soldiers under

On the twenty third, the van of the fleet,
led by captain Howe in the *Magnanime*,
stood

under my command; as also to punish any offenders or transgressors by death, or otherwise according to the nature of their offence: and whereas the success of this important descent on the coast of France, may greatly depend on the good order and discipline to be observed by the officers and soldiers: I judge it absolutely necessary for the just execution of his majesty's orders, and for the safety and honour of the troops under my command, to establish the following rules and ordinances: and at the same time to declare that no offender against them shall meet with any pardon.

No soldier shall pass by day or by night beyond the sentries of the camp, but with an officer: every man that attempts it, will immediately be shot.

Whenever the army marches, the strictest order is to be observed; and if any soldier leaves his place without permission from his officer, upon any occasion, he shall suffer death.

When any private man has leave from his officer to quit his platoon, or division, a non-commissioned officer shall be left to bring him up.

All marauding and plundering, without the permission of the commander in chief, will be punished with death: and all other irregularities, or misbehaviour of any kind, with extreme severity; on the other hand, the general will make it his study and endeavour to reward the deserving.

Drunkeness will be punished with the utmost rigour, especially in those who are found drunk upon duty.

Men

flood towards Aix, a small island situated in the mouth of the river Charente, leading up

Men who are sent for wood, water, provisions, stores, &c. are to be commanded by an officer or non-commissioned officer, in proportion to the station: and such officers, and non-commissioned officers, are to be answerable to the general for their conduct.

Officers, non-commissioned officers, and men upon duty, are to be very exact and diligent; and none are to absent themselves from their guards or detachments, without leave from their commanders, on any pretence whatsoever.

Soldiers of all corps are to obey the officers of all regiments, without distinction; and each is to do his best endeavours to forward his majesty's service, upon this important occasion.

The rolls are to be called over, by an officer of a company, four times in twenty-four hours; two of which shall be between tattoo and reveille.

Officers commanding upon any advanced posts, or out guards, shall have their rolls called every two hours; and whatever non-commissioned officer or soldier shall be absent at the calling of the roll, shall immediately be brought to a court-martial, and suffer death, or such other punishment as the court-martial shall think fit to inflict.

Any soldier, who fires away his ammunition without order, will be accounted a disobeyer of military command, and punished accordingly; and any man who flies from his colours under pretence of wanting ammunition, or for other causes, will be put to death.

up to Rochfort, the fortifications half finished, and mounted with about thirty cannon and

A soldier is not to commit acts of barbarity, or cruel inhumanity, upon the inhabitants of the country, under pain of the severest punishment. Whatever works the troops are employed upon, must be executed with all possible care and diligence. Both officers and men must engage heartily in every thing that tends to the public good.

The general does not doubt but that every part of the service will be chearfully and resolutely carried on by the troops, that from their behaviour and conduct his majesty and their country may be satisfied, that nothing has been wanting on their part to procure success.

Officers, who distinguish themselves, may be sure of the general's particular approbation and regard; and he will most certainly recommend them, in the strongest manner, to his majesty and the duke: and that he may have the satisfaction of doing this piece of justice to the officers under his command, he expects that what he himself does not observe of this sort, may be told him by the commanding officers of corps, with all the circumstances of advantage to the officers.

Whatever detachment, party, or battalion, shall behave with uncommon resolution, may expect all the credit that arises from such behaviour; and that a just account will be given of their performances."

Such were the orders issued by the general, which we thought necessary to insert, as they were received with loud acclamations, and unusual demonstrations of satisfaction, testifying how chearfully the troops would comply, if called upon.

and mortars, the garrison composed of six hundred men, and the whole island about five miles in circumference.

As the *Magnanime* approached, the enemy fired briskly upon her; but captain Howe, regardless of their faint endeavours, kept on his course, till having gained the front of the fort, he dropt his anchors close to the walls, and poured out so incessant a fire as soon silenced them. It was, however, near an hour before the fort struck, when some forces were landed to take possession of so important a conquest, with orders to demolish the fortifications, the care of which was entrusted to vice admiral Knowles.

However inconsiderable this success, it greatly elated the troops, and was deemed an happy omen of further advantages; but instead of debarking the troops that night, as was universally expected, several successive days were spent in councils of war, soundings of the coast, and deliberations whether the express orders they had received were practicable, or to be complied with. Eight days had elapsed since the first appearance of the fleet on the coast, and the alarm was given to the enemy.

Sir Edward Hawke, indeed, proposed laying a sixty gun ship against Fouras, and batter-

battering that sort, which, it was thought, would help to secure the landing of the troops, and facilitate the enterprize on Rochfort. This a French pilot on board undertook; but after a ship had been lightened for the purpose, vice admiral Knowles reported, that a bomb-ketch had ran aground at above the distance of two miles from the fort; upon which the project of battering or bombarding it was abandoned. The admiral likewise proposed to bombard Rochelle; but this overture was over ruled by the opinion of the other officers. It was at length determined in a council of war, held on the eighth, to make a descent, and attack the forts leading to and upon the mouth of the river Charente.

An order, in consequence of this resolution, was immediately issued for the troops to be ready to go from the transports in the boats precisely at twelve o'clock at night. A number of men of war's boats, under the command of a lieutenant, were appointed to attend each regiment, and to receive the grenadiers picquet companies, and in a number proportioned to their bulk; but with great caution not to overcrowd the boats. The colonel of each regiment was directed to land with the first detachment, if it amounted to three companies.

The troops were ordered to proceed silently and quietly to the place of rendezvous appointed for the division, and then to receive their command from a captain of a ship of war, which they were enjoined faithfully to obey. It was strongly recommended to the soldiers to imitate the example so lately set before them, in the brave and resolute attack that was made upon the isle of Aix. They were commanded to form and attack whatever appeared before them on their first landing; and colonel, afterwards general Kingsley, was ordered to march with the grenadiers on their landing, with lieutenant colonel Sir William Boothby, and major Farquhar.

However judicious these orders, and however agreeable to military rules, they did not fail to fill the troops with the utmost surprize and amazement. The transports were at that time above four miles from shore; the enemy alarmed for eight days, and putting themselves in a posture of defence; several battalions, had been seen marching along the coast from Rochelle; the shore, it was probable, was now lined with batteries; the sea was rough and the weather stormy; the first body of men landed, which could not amount to eighteen hundred, must defend themselves for the space

space of six hours before a second disembarkation could be effected, and that without the hopes of a retreat, as the boats were ordered immediately to row back to the transports to take in more forces. All these, with a variety of other difficulties, were too obvious to escape the notice of the most ignorant of the soldiers.

Notwithstanding the danger of the attempt, there was the utmost alacrity among the troops; and every thing was pursued with so much spirit and expedition, that all the boats were filled an hour sooner than the time appointed. Here they remained beating against each other, and the sides of the ships, for the space of four hours, while the council were determining whether, after all the trouble given, they should land; when at length an order was published for the troops to return to their respective transports, and all thoughts of a descent, to appearance, laid aside.

The succeeding days were spent in blowing up and demolishing the fortifications of Aix; after which, in consequence of a letter from Sir Edward Hawke, the land officers took the final resolution of returning to England without any farther attempt, fully satisfied they had done all in their power to execute the designs of the

ministry, and chusing rather to bear the resentment of an incensed nation, than to encounter the danger, with which, they imagined, a descent would be attended. Such was the issue of an expedition that raised the expectation of all Europe, threw the coasts of France into the utmost confusion, and cost the people of England little less than a million of money!

The fleet was no sooner returned, than the whole nation was in a ferment. The public expectation had been wound up to the highest pitch, and now the disappointment was proportioned to the sanguine hopes conceived, that the pride of France would have been humbled by so formidable an armament. The ministry, and with them the nation in general, exclaimed against the commanding officers; and the military gentlemen retorted the calumny, by laying the blame on the projectors of the enterprize, who had put the nation to an immense expence, before they procured the necessary information. Certain it was, that blame must fall somewhere, and the ministry resolved to acquit themselves, and fix the accusation, by requesting his majesty to appoint a board of officers of character and ability to enquire into the causes of the late miscarriage. This alone it was that

that could appease the public clamour, and afford general satisfaction.

Accordingly a board, consisting of three officers of rank, reputation, and ability, was appointed by his majesty, pursuant to the following warrant, to inquire into the reasons why the fleet had returned without having executed his majesty's orders. "Whereas we were pleased, in August last, to send a number of troops on an expedition against France, with orders and instructions to attempt, as far as should be found practicable, a descent on the French coast, at or near Rochefort; in order to attack, if practicable, and, by a vigorous impression, force that place; and to burn and destroy, to the utmost of their power, all docks, magazines, arsenals, and shipping, that should be found there; and to exert such other efforts, as should be judged most proper for annoying the enemy, as by our several instructions to the commander of the said forces does more fully appear: and whereas the troops sent for these purposes are returned to Great-Britain, no attempt having been made to land on the coast of France; concerning the causes of which inaction, we think it necessary that enquiry should be made by the general officers herein after named, in order that they may re-

port those causes to us, for our better information: our will and pleasure is, and we do hereby nominate and appoint our right trusty and entirely beloved cousin and counsellor Charles duke of Marlborough, lieutenant-general; our trusty and well-beloved George Sackville, commonly called lord George Sackville, and John Waldegrave, major generals of our forces, to examine and inquire touching the matters aforesaid: and you are to give notice to the said general-officers when and where they are to meet, for the said examination: and the said general-officers are hereby directed to cause you to summon such persons, (whether the generals or other officers employed in the expedition, or others) as are necessary to give information touching the said matters, or as shall be desired by those who were employed in the expedition: and the said general-officers are hereby farther directed to hear such persons as shall offer to give them information touching the same: and they are authorized, impowered, and required, strictly to examine into the matters before-mentioned, and to report a state thereof as it shall appear to them, together with their opinion thereon: all which you are to transmit to our secretary of war, to be

be by him laid before us for our consideration."

This warrant, dated on the first day of November, was directed to Thomas Morgan, Esq; his majesty's judge-advocate; and, in consequence of it, the three general-officers met on the twenty-first of the same month. To determine the practicability of executing his majesty's orders, it was necessary to know the nature of the intelligence upon which the expedition was projected. The first and most important was a letter sent to Sir John, afterwards lord Ligonier, by lieutenant-colonel Clark. This letter, which had been frequently examined in the privy-council, imported, that colonel Clark, in returning from Gibraltar in the year 1754, had travelled along the western coast of France, to observe the condition of the fortifications, and judge how far a descent would be practicable, in case of a rupture between Great-Britain and France: that, on his coming to Rochefort, where he was attended by an engineer, he was surprised to find the greatest part of a good rampart, with a revetment, flanked only with redans; no out-works, no covert-way, and in many places no ditch, so that the bottom of the wall was seen at a distance: that in other places, where the earth had been

been taken out to form the rampart, there was left round them a considerable height of ground, whence an enemy might draw great advantage : that, for above the length of a front, or two or three hundred yards, there was no rampart, or even entrenchment, but only small ditches, in the low and marshy grounds next the river, which however were dry at low water ; yet the bottom remained muddy and slimy : towards the river no rampart, no batteries, no parapet, on either side, appeared ; and on the land-side he observed some high ground, within the distance of one hundred and fifty or two hundred yards of the town ; in which condition, he was told by the engineer, the place had remained for above seventy years : that, to prevent giving umbrage, he drew no plan of the place, and even burnt the few sketches he had by him : however, as to utility, he declared himself as much satisfied as if he had got a plan : that he could not ascertain the direct height of the rampart ; but thought it could not exceed twenty-five feet, including the parapet : that the river might be about one hundred and thirty broad, and the entrance defended by two or three small redoubts : and that as to forces, none were ever garrisoned at Rochefort, except marines, which, at the
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time he was on the spot, amounted to about one thousand.

This was the first intelligence, which the ministry received of the state of Rochefort; and from this, it was thought, there was reason to believe, that an attack by surprise might be attempted with good hopes of success. It was true, that colonel Clark made his observations in time of peace; but it was likewise probable, that no great alterations were made, on account of the war, as the place had continued in the same condition, during the two or three last wars with France, when they had the same reasons as now to expect their coasts would be insulted.

The next information was obtained from Joseph Thierry, a French pilot, of the Protestant religion, who passed several examinations before the privy-council. This person declared, that he had followed the business of a pilot on the coasts of France for the space of twenty years, and served as first pilot in several of the king's ships: that he had, in particular, piloted the *Magnanime*, before she was taken by the English, for about twenty-two months, and had often conducted her into the road of the Isle of Aix: that he was perfectly acquainted with the entrance to that road, which,
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he said, was so easy as to render a pilot almost unnecessary : that it afforded good anchorage in twelve or fourteen fathom water, as far as Bayonne : that the channel between the islands of Oleron and Rhé was three leagues broad, and the banks necessary to be avoided near the land, except one called the Boiard, which is easily discerned by the breakers : that the largest vessels might draw up close to the fort of Aix, which, he affirmed, the *Magnanime* could alone destroy : that the largest ships might come up to the Virgerot, two miles distant from the mouth of the river, with all their cannon and stores : that men might be landed to the north of fort Fouras, out of sight of the fort, upon a meadow, where the ground is firm and level, under cover of the cannon of the fleet : that this landing place was about five miles from Rochefort, the way dry, and no way intercepted by ditches and morasses : and that part of the city was encompassed by a wall ; but towards the river, on both sides, for about sixty paces, it was inclosed only with palisades, without a fosse.

To the intelligence of colonel Clark and Thierry, the ministry added a secret account obtained of the strength and distribution of the French forces ; whence it appeared highly

ly probable, that not more than ten thousand men could be allowed for the defence of the whole coast, from St. Valery to Bourdeaux.

In consequence of the above information the secret expedition was planned; instructions given to Sir John Mordaunt and admiral Hawke to make a vigorous impression on the French coast, and all the other measures concerted, which, it was imagined, would make an effectual diversion, by obliging the enemy to withdraw a great part of their forces from Germany, disturb and shake the credit of their public loans, impair the strength and resources of their navy, prevent the execution of their military enterprizes, and, finally, give life, strength, and lustre to the common cause and his majesty's arms.

The board of enquiry took next into consideration the several letters and explanatory instructions sent to Sir John Mordaunt, in consequence of some difficulties which might possibly occur, stated by that general in letters to the minister, previous to his sailing. Then they examined the report made to Sir Edward Hawke by admiral Broderick, and the captains of men of war sent to sound the French shore from Rochelle to fort Fouras, dated September
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the twenty-ninth ; the result of the councils of war on the twenty-fifth and twenty-eighth ; Sir Edward Hawke's letter to Sir John Mordaunt on the twenty-seventh, and the general's answer on the twenty-ninth : after which Sir John Mordaunt was called upon to give his reasons for not carrying his majesty's instructions and orders into execution.

This he did in substance as follows : the attempt on Rochefort, he said, was to have been on the footing of a coup de main, or surprise, which it would be impossible to execute, if the design was discovered, or the alarm taken : that an attempt could not be made, nay, that his majesty did not require it should be made, unless a proper place for debarking, and a safe retreat for his troops, was discovered ; particularly where the ships could protect them, and a safe communication with the fleet, and conveyance of supplies from it, was found : that the advice he received in writing from Sir John Ligonier, on his first being appointed to command the expedition, was perfectly conformable to these instructions : that although Rochefort should have remained in the situation in which colonel Clark and the pilot Thierry had seen it three years before, yet that a few days preparation

paration could make it sufficiently defensible against a coup de main : that judging, therefore, the dependance on such an operation alone improper, he applied to the ministry for two more old battalions, and artillery for a regular attack to force the place ; which, from its construction, appeared as difficult to be made defensible against the latter, as easily secured against the former : that this request, however, being refused, he still thought it his duty to obey his orders on the footing the expedition was planned, especially as he understood his instructions were discretionary, regarding the circumstances of the time, the condition of the place, and the nature of the service.

He then recited the positive and credible intelligence received, as well before as after the embarkation, of the alarm given to France, and the preparations made along the French coasts from Brest and St. Malo's to Rochefort ; the accidents that kept the fleet hovering along the coasts, and prevented the possibility of an attempt by surprise ; the reports of all the gentlemen employed in sounding the coasts, so contrary to the intelligence given by Thierry the pilot ; the opinion of the council of war, by which he was directed to act, and with which his own judgment concurred ; the endeavours used,

after the twenty sixth, to find out some expedient for annoying the enemy, and executing his majesty's instructions; the attempt made to land, in consequence of the resolution of the second council of war, which was prevented by boisterous and stormy weather: and, lastly, the reasons that determined him, in concert with the other land officers, to return to England.

Having considered all these circumstances, and examined several officers who served in the expedition, the court of enquiry gave in the following report to his majesty.

“ It appears to us, that one cause of the expedition having failed is the not attacking fort Fouras by sea, at the same time that it could have been attacked by land, agreeable to the first design, which certainly must have been of the greatest utility towards carrying your majesty's instructions into execution. It was at first resolved by admiral Hawke (Thierry, the pilot, having undertaken the safe conduct of a ship to fort Fouras for that purpose) but afterwards laid aside, upon the representation of vice admiral Knowles, that the *Barfleur*, the ship designed for that service, was on ground, at the distance of between four and five miles from the shore; but as neither Sir Edward Hawke or the pilot could attend to give any
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information upon that head, we cannot presume to offer any certain opinion thereupon.

“ We conceive another cause of the failure of the expedition to have been, that instead of attempting to land when the report was received, on the twenty-fourth of September, from rear admiral Broderick, and the captains who had been sent out to sound and reconnoitre, a council of war was summoned and held on the twenty-fifth; in which it was unanimously resolved, not to land, as the attempt on Rochefort was neither adviseable nor practicable: but it does not appear to us, that there was then, or at any time afterwards, either a body of troops or batteries on shore sufficient to have prevented the attempting a descent, in pursuance of the instructions signed by your majesty; neither does it appear to us, that there were any reasons sufficient to induce the council of war to believe that Rochefort was so far changed, in respect of its strength or posture of defence, since the expedition was first resolved on in England, as to prevent all attempts of an attack upon the place, in order to burn and destroy the docks, magazines, arsenals, and shipping, in obedience to your majesty's commands.

“ And we think ourselves obliged to remark, in the council of war on the twenty-eighth of September, that no reason could have existed sufficient to prevent the attempt of landing the troops, as the council then unanimously resolved to land with all possible dispatch.

“ We beg leave also to remark, that after its being unanimously resolved to land, in the council of war of the twenty-eighth of September, the resolution was taken of returning to England, without any regular or general meeting of the said council : but, as the whole operation was of so inconsiderable a nature, we do not offer this to your majesty as a cause of the failure of the expedition ; since we cannot but look upon the expedition to have failed from the time the great object of it was laid aside, in the council of war of the twenty-fifth.”

This report was but ill calculated to appease the resentment of the people, who still continued to inveigh, with great acrimony, against the officers of the army.

The enemies of the minister too made a handle of the miscarriage, to lessen him in the esteem of the public, by laying the whole blame on his forming a project so expensive to the nation, on intelligence not only slight at the first view, but false upon
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farther examination. But the people were not to be influenced by such invidious insinuations. They were inclined to impute the failure of the expedition to the negligence of those who had been intrusted with its execution. They discerned something mysterious in the whole conduct of the commander in chief. They plainly perceived, that caution took place of vigour, and that the hours for action were spent in deliberations and councils of war. Had he debarked the troops, and made such an attack as would have distinguished his courage, the voice of the people would have acquitted him, however unsuccessful, though prudence perhaps might have condemned him.

In a word, the popular clamour was so loud and universal, that nothing less than a public trial of the commander in chief was thought sufficient to allay it. This indulgence, therefore, was granted by his majesty with great alacrity. It is even said that Sir John Mordaunt himself demanded to have his conduct scrutinized, by which method alone he was sensible his character could be re-established. His majesty's warrant for holding a court martial was accordingly signed on the third day of December. The court was composed of nine lieutenant-generals,

nine major-generals, and three colonels, who sat on the fourteenth, and continued by several adjournments to the twentieth.

Lieutenant general Sir John Mordaunt came prisoner before the court, and a charge was exhibited against him, importing, that he being appointed by the king commander in chief of his majesty's forces sent on an expedition to the coast of France, and having received orders and instructions relative thereto from his majesty, under his royal sign-manual, and also by one of his principal secretaries of state, had disobeyed his majesty said orders and instructions.

The proceedings of this court were nearly similar to those of the court of inquiry. The same evidences were examined, with the addition of Sir Edward Hawke's deposition; and a defence, differing in no essential point from the former, was made by the prisoner: but the judgment given was clear and explicit. Sir John Mordaunt was unanimously found Not guilty, and therefore acquitted, while the public opinion remained unaltered; and many persons inveighed as bitterly against the lenity of the present court-martial, as they had formerly against the severity of the sentence passed upon a late unfortunate admiral.

Besides

Besides the diversion intended by a descent on the coast of France, several other methods were employed to distress the enemy, as well as to protect the trade of the kingdom, secure our colonies in the West-Indies, and insure the continuance of the extraordinary success which had lately blessed his majesty's arms in the East Indies; but these will come to be related, with greater propriety, in the sequel.

On the ninth of February admiral West sailed with a squadron of men of war to the westward; as did admiral Coates with the fleet under his under his convoy to the West-Indies; and commodore Stevens with the trade to the East Indies, in the month of March. Admiral Holbourn and commodore Holmes, with eleven ships of the line, a fireship, bomb-ketch, and fifty transports, sailed from St. Helen's for America in April. The admiral had on board six thousand two hundred effective men, exclusive of officers, under the command of general Hopson, assisted by lord Charles Hay. In May admiral Osborne, forced back to Plymouth with his squadron by stress of weather, set sail for the Mediterranean; as did two ships of war sent to convoy the American trade.

In the mean time the privateers, fitted out by private merchants, and societies, greatly

greatly annoyed the French commerce. The Antigallican, a private ship of war, equipped by a society of patriotic gentlemen, who assumed that name, took the Duke de Penthièvre Indiaman off the port of Corunna, and carried her into Cadiz. The prize was estimated worth two hundred thousand pounds; and immediate application was made by the French court to that of Spain for restitution, while the proprietors of the Antigallican rested in full security upon the honour of the Spanish nation, who had hitherto pretended to observe a most exact neutrality.

This, however, was no more than a pretence. Under the character of a neutral power, they had always discovered a strong partiality in favour of their brethren, the French; and they now gave an incontestable proof of their hatred to England, by first violently wresting the Penthièvre out of the hands of the captors, then detaining her as a deposit, with sealed hatches, and a Spanish guard on board, till the claims of both parties could be examined; and at last adjudging her to be an illegal capture, and consequently restoring her to the French, to the great disappointment of the owners of the privateer.

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Besides the success which attended a great number of other privateers, the lords of the admiralty published a list of above thirty ships of war and privateers taken from the enemy, in the space of four months, by the English sloop and men of war; exclusive of the Duke de Aquitaine Indiaman, now fitted out as a ship of war, taken by the Eagle and Medway; the Pondicherry Indiaman, valued at one hundred and sixty thousand pounds, taken by the Dover man of war; and above six privateers brought into port by the brave and resolute captain Lockhart, for which he was honoured with a variety of presents of plate by several corporations, in testimony of their esteem and regard. This run of good fortune, however, was not without some retribution on the side of the enemy, who, out of twenty-one ships homeward-bound from Carolina, found means to intercept no less than nineteen; whence the merchants sustained considerable damage, and a great quantity of valuable commodities, indigo in particular, was lost to this country.

Notwithstanding the large imports of grain from different parts of Europe and America, the artifice of engrossers still kept up the price of corn. So enraged were the populace at the iniquitous combinations formed to frustrate the endeavours of the
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legislature, and to oppress the poor, that they rose in a tumultuous manner in several counties, sometimes to the number of five or six thousand, and seized upon the grain brought to market.

Nor in this was there any thing surprising, considering the distress to which many persons were reduced. The difficulty of obtaining the necessaries of life enhanced the price of labour, at the most unseasonable juncture, when all manufacturers were overstocked for want of a proper market, which obliged them to dismiss above half the hands before employed. Hence arose the most pitiable condition of several thousands of useful industrious subjects; a calamity attended only with one advantage to the public, namely, that it disposed a great number of persons to enlist, with more alacrity, in his majesty's service. At last the plentiful crops, with which it pleased Providence to bless these kingdoms, the prodigious quantities of corn imported from foreign countries, and the wise measures of the legislature, broke all the villainous schemes concerted by forestallers and engrossers, and reduced the price of corn to the usual standard. The public joy on this event was greatly increased by the safe arrival of the fleet from the Leeward Islands, amounting to ninety-two sail; and of the
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Streights fleet, esteemed worth three millions sterling, by which the silk manufacturers in particular were again employed, and their distresses relieved.

About the same time the India company was highly elated with the joyful account of the safe arrival and spirited conduct of three of their captains, attacked in their passage homeward by two French men of war, one of sixty-four, the other of twenty-six guns. After a warm engagement, which lasted for three hours, they obliged the French ships to sheer off, with scarce any loss on their own side. When the engagements began, the captains had promised a reward of a thousand pounds to the crews, by way of incitement to their valour; and the company now doubled the sum, in recompence of their fidelity and courage.

Before we resume the account of foreign transactions, it may not be improper to mention a few domestic occurrences, which however detached and unconnected, must yet be related in succession. Among the most interesting we may reckon those tumults and riots of the populace in Kent, Hertfordshire, Nottinghamshire, Lincolnshire, Bedfordshire, York city and county, to oppose the execution of the militia bill. Many disorders were committed on these occasions; and the people, provoked at the

the irregular proceedings of the gentlemen appointed to carry the act into execution, and with certain defects in the act itself, seemed wholly to forget the real advantages, which in time must necessarily flow from a measure the most constitutional and salutary that can be imagined, for the defence and protection of public liberty.

His majesty, having taken into consideration the incredible damage sustained by the commerce of these kingdoms, for want of proper harbours and forts on the western coast to receive and protect merchantmen, was graciously pleased to order, that a temporary security should be provided for the shipping which might touch at Milford-Haven, until the fortifications, voted in parliament, could be erected.

Reflecting, at the same time, on the numerous hardships, that had lately been suffered by the innholders in the county of Kent, by the constant quartering of soldiers in their houses, he was further pleased to direct the sum of three thousand pounds to be transmitted to them, and distributed by Mr. Austen, clerk of the peace for that county; a well-timed act of liberality, that fully demonstrated his extreme affection and tender regard for the interest and happiness of his people.

End of the FORTY-FIRST VOLUME.

